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## THE CONSTITUTIONAL AGITATION IN RUSSIA.

The greatest excitement has prevailed in Russia for the last few weeks since it became known that representatives of the Zemstvos of thirty-four provinces of the Empire were going to meet at St. Petersburg in order to discuss the necessary reforms in the general political organization of the country. The very fact that such an authorization had been granted was equivalent to an invitation to discuss a scheme of a Constitution; and so it was understood everywhere. When the Zemstvo delegates were leaving their respective provincial towns they were sent off by groups of enthusiastic friends, whose parting words were: "Return with a Constitution!"

Their original intention was to make of their conference a solemn official gathering which would speak to the Government in its official capacity, but at the last moment the Minister of the Interior refused to grant the necessary authorization; and as the Zemstvo delegates declared that they were decided to meet nevertheless, they

were informed that they could do so only in private, and that their conference would be treated as a private gathering, but that their resolutions could be handed by a few delegates to the Minister of the Interior, and through his intermediacy to the Emperor. This is how this Conference, which surely will become an important historical date, took place on the 19th, 20th, and 21st of November at St. Petersburg.

The decisions of the Conference were expressed in eleven resolutions, which, as will be seen presently, are now becoming the programme of an agitation which is gradually spreading all over Russia. Moreover, in contrast with all the petitions addressed to the Tsar on previous occasions by certain Zemstvos, the present memorandum is couched in far more dignified language and in definite terms. It begins by mentioning "the abnormal character of State government which has developed since the beginning of the eighties [1881], and consists in a complete es-

trangement of the Government from the people, and the absence of that mutual confidence which is necessary for the life of the State" (Section 1). "The present relations between the Government and the people"—they say further on—"are based on a fear of the people's self-administration, and on the exclusion of the people from the management of State affairs" (Section 2). The result of it is that while the bureaucracy separates the Supreme Power [read *The Emperor*] from the nation, it thus creates the very conditions for an entire lawlessness in the administration, in which the personal will of every functionary takes the place of law (Section 3). This destroys confidence in the Government and hampers the development of the State (Sections 3 and 4). Consequently, the Zemstvos express the following desiderata, which deserve to be given in full, because in such history-making documents as this the wording is almost as important as the general idea:

(5) In order to put an end to this lawlessness of the Administration, the inviolability of the individual and the private dwelling must be proclaimed and thoroughly carried out in life. Nobody can have a punishment or any restriction of his rights inflicted upon him without a sentence having been pronounced to this effect by an independent magistrate. For this purpose it is moreover necessary to establish such a responsibility of the members of the Administration as would allow of their being legally prosecuted for each breach of the law, in order thus to secure legality in the actions of the functionaries.

(6) For the full development of the intellectual forces of the nation, as also

<sup>1</sup> The smallest self-administrating unit is now the district ("uezd"), which embodies from 100,000 to 200,000 inhabitants. The next unit below it, the canton ("volost") has also a self-administration, but only for the peasants. The Zemstvo resolution asks for a "self-governed canton," composed of all the inhabitants, while the peasant self-government

the expression of the real wants of society and the free exercise of public opinion, freedom of conscience, religion, speech, and press, as also of meeting and association, must be guaranteed.

(7) The personal and political rights of all the citizens of the empire must be equal.

(8) Self-administration being the main condition for the development of the political and economical life of the country, and the main body of the population of Russia belonging to the class of the peasants, these last must be placed in the conditions that are necessary for the development of self-help and energy, and this can only be obtained by putting an end to the present subordinate and lawless position of the peasants. Therefore it is necessary: (a) to equalize the rights of the peasants with those of all other classes; (b) to free them from the rule of the Administration in all their personal and social affairs; and (c) to grant them a regular form of justice.

(9) The provincial and the municipal institutions which are the main organs of local life must be placed in such conditions as to render them capable of performing the functions of organs of self-administration, endowed with wide powers. It is necessary for this purpose: (a) that the representation in the Zemstvos should not be based on class principles, and that all forces of the population should be summoned, as far as possible, to take part in that administration; (b) that the Zemstvo institutions should be brought nearer to the people by instituting a smaller self-administrative unit;<sup>1</sup> (c) that the circle of activity of the Zemstvos and the municipal institutions should include all the local needs; and (d) that these institutions should acquire the necessary stability and independence, without which no regular development of their activity and their relations to the organs of the Government is possible. It would be limited to the village community. It must be said that all the peasant self-government, introduced in 1861, had been entirely wrecked under Alexander III. by the introduction of special "land-chiefs," nominated by the Governor of the Province, and endowed with unlimited rights.

Local self-government must be extended to all the parts of the Empire.

(10) For creating and maintaining a close intercourse between the Government and the nation, on the basis of the just-mentioned principles, and for the regular development of the life of the State, it is absolutely necessary that representatives of the nation, constituting a specially elected body, should participate in the legislative power, the establishment of the State's budget, and the control of the Administration. [The minority of the conference, consisting of twenty-seven persons, accepted this paragraph only as far as the words "should participate in the legislative power."]

(11) In view of the gravity and the difficulties of both the internal and external conditions which the nation is now living through, this private conference expresses the hope that the supreme power will call together the representatives of the nation, in order to lead our Fatherland, with their help, on to a new path of national development in the sense of establishing a closer union between the State's authority and the nation.

This memorandum, signed by 102 delegates out of 104—two abstaining—was handed to Prince Sviatopolk Mirsky, and through him to the Emperor. Four more resolutions were taken later on by the same Conference, and they offer a special interest, as they represent a first attempt at legislation upon a definite subject in the form, well known in olden times in this country, of a Royal petition. Three of these resolutions, which concern education, blame the Government for its negative attitude in this matter, and ask full freedom for the Zemstvos to deal with it; while the fourth demands the abrogation of the state-of-siege law and an amnesty in the following terms:

Considering that the Law of the 26th of August 1881, embodying the Measures for the Maintenance of Order in the State [state-of-siege law] is one of the chief causes which favor the

development of lawlessness in the Administration and breed popular discontent, which both stand in the way of mutual confidence and unity between the Government and the population, the Conference finds that the repeal of this law is desirable. Besides, taking into consideration that the system of administratively inflicted penalties, which has been applied lately on a large scale in virtue of that law, has produced a great number of victims of the arbitrary actions of the Administration who are now suffering various penalties and limitations in their legal rights, the Conference considers it its duty to express itself in favor of a complete remission of all penalties inflicted by mere orders of Administration. It expresses at the same time the hope that the Supreme Power will introduce pacification in the country by an act of amnesty for all persons undergoing penalties for political offences.

The Press was not permitted to mention the Zemstvo Conference, or to discuss its resolutions; but the latter were hectographed in thousands of copies at St. Petersburg, reprinted in a more or less clandestine way in many cities, and spread broadcast all over Russia. On the other side, as soon as Sviatopolk Mirsky had made his declarations about the need of "confidence between the Government and the nation"—confirming his declarations by the release of a small number of "administrative" exiles—the Press at once adopted quite a new tone. The need for a new departure, under which the nation would be called to participate in the government of the country, began to be expressed in a very outspoken way. All the main questions concerning the revision of taxation, the necessity of not merely returning to the original law of the Zemstvos (altered in 1890), but of revising it in the sense of an abolition of the present division into "orders"; the necessity of re-establishing the elected Justices of the Peace, and of granting a thorough self-government to all the

provinces of the Empire; the equality of political rights of all citizens, and so on—these and numbers of similar questions are discussed now with the greatest liberty in the daily Press, and nobody conceals any longer his disgust of the reactionary régime which has swayed Russia for the last thirty years.

Of course, censorship continues to make its victims. The review *Law* (*Pravo*) has already received two warnings, and of the two new dailies, one (*Son of the Fatherland*), which came out under a new "populist" editorship, is already suppressed for three months; while the other (*Our Life*), which has Social Democratic tendencies, has its sale in the streets forbidden. With all that, the Press, with a striking unanimity, support the Zemstvo resolutions, without naming them. Even the *Noyoye Vremya*, which has always vacillated between ultra-Conservative and Liberal opinions, according to the direction of the wind in the upper spheres, is now Constitutional. As to the ultra-reactionary Prince Meschersky, owner of the *Grazhdanin*, he has published some of the most outspoken articles against the old régime—only to turn next day *against* those who demand a Constitution. Since 1861, this gentleman's house has been the centre of a semi-Slavophile but chiefly landlord and bureaucracy opposition to the reforms of Alexander the Second. Hold was adroitly taken in this centre of the two successive heirs to the throne, Nikolai Alexandrovitch and his brother, who became later on Alexander the Third, in order to secure, through them, an overthrow of all the reforms made by their father.<sup>2</sup> Now, the *Grazhdanin* reflects the unsettled condition of mind in the Winter Palace spheres. The *Moscow Gazette* is thus

the only consequent defender of the old régime. At the same time, the provincial Press acquires a new importance every day, especially in Southern, South-Western, and South-Eastern Russia. I have several of these papers before me, and cannot but admire the straightforward and well-informed way in which they discuss all political questions. They reveal quite a new provincial life.

It would be impossible to render in a few words the depth and breadth of the agitation provoked in Russia by the Zemstvo Conference. To begin with, "the Resolutions" were signed at once by numbers of persons of high standing in St. Petersburg society, who do not belong to the Zemstvos. The same is now done in the provinces, so that the memorandum of the Zemstvos becomes a sort of ultimatum—it cannot be called a petition—addressed by the educated portion of the nation to the Emperor. In most provincial cities the return of the Zemstvo delegates is being made the occasion of influential meetings, at which the members of the Provincial Assemblies (the District Assemblies will follow suit) send to St. Petersburg their approval of the resolutions; while numbers of landlords and other influential persons in the provinces seize this opportunity for adding their signatures to those of the Zemstvo delegates.

Wherever a few educated persons come together, nothing is spoken of but the coming Constitution. Even the appalling war has been relegated to the background, while the constitutional agitation takes every day some new form. In the universities, both professors and students join it. The former sign the resolutions, while the latter formulate similar resolutions, or organize street demonstrations to support them. Such demonstrations have taken place already at St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kieff, and they surely will

<sup>2</sup> The "Memoirs" of Prince Meschersky contain extremely instructive data in this respect.

be joined by working men as soon as they spread southwards. And if they are dispersed by force they will result in bloodshed, of which none can foresee the end.

Another important current in the movement was created by the celebrations of the fortieth anniversary of the Judicial Law, which was promulgated on the 2nd of December 1864. Large meetings of lawyers (*avocats*), followed by banquets, at which all professions of "intellectuals" were represented, including members of the magistracy and, occasionally, of the administration, have been held at St. Petersburg, Moscow, Saratoff, Minsk, Tomsk, and so on; and at all these meetings the programme of the *Zemstvos*, reinforced by strong resolutions requiring the repeal of the exceptional state-of-siege law and condemning the whole *régime* under which Russia is now, was voted and transmitted to the Minister of the Interior. At Moscow the resolutions passed at the meeting of the lawyers were worded very strongly, as may be seen from the following characteristic abstracts:

"(1) The fundamental principles of Right, expressed in the Judicial Law of the 2nd of December 1864, and which recognize only such a form of State life, in which all the actions of all are submitted to law, equal for all, and applied by the Courts with no regard to any outside influence, are incompatible with the principles of the bureaucratic lawlessness which endeavors to take hold of every manifestation of life and to submit it to its uncontrolled power."  
... "(4) The principle of religious tolerance, proclaimed in this law, was brought into non-existence by a series of by-laws and circulars, by means of which large portions of the population were placed into special categories, and deprived of important personal, family and property rights—and this, not for crimes of theirs, and not in virtue of legal sentences, but merely for the expression of the dictates of their con-

science, and by mere orders of the Administration." . . . "(7) The principle of an independent Justice, equal for all, has been reduced to nought by the abolition of all guarantees of independence"; and the declaration enumerates the main by-laws by means of which this purpose was achieved.

And, finally, their last resolution expresses what every educated Russian is thinking, while at the same time it contains a reply to the Tsar's manifesto of April 1903. It runs as follows:

It appears from all the life of Russia for the last forty years that it is absolutely hopeless to endeavor to introduce in our country the reign of Right, so long as the arbitrary rule of bureaucracy continues to exist, even though all sorts of rights may be inscribed in our code.

Nothing short of a thorough reform in the fundamental laws of the State can secure the ends of justice and law—such is the conclusion of the Moscow lawyers.

Striking facts were produced at these meetings. Thus, the following figures just published by *The Messenger of Law* will illustrate the lawlessness which prevails under Nicholas the Second in all matters concerning political offences. From 1894 till 1901, not one single political affair was brought before a court of justice or an examining magistrate. All inquests were dealt with by police officers or functionaries of the Ministry of the Interior. As to the numbers of such cases, they are simply extravagant. Thus in 1903 no fewer than 1988 political cases, concerning 5590 persons, were opened, in addition to all those which were pending. In the same year, 1522 inquests, involving 6450 persons, were terminated. Out of this number 1583 persons were liberated, 45 were sent before courts-martial, and *no fewer than 4867 persons were submitted to various penalties, including imprisonment, inflicted by the*

*Administration, without the interference of any magistrate.* Out of these, *no fewer than 1502 were sent into exile*, for terms up to ten years, to various remote provinces of Russia and Siberia! Nothing on this scale was done even under Alexander the Third, the corresponding figure for the last year of his reign being only 55 (in 1894).

The Judicial Law of 1864 contained certain guarantees against the arbitrary action of the police. But, as has been indicated during the last few days, already in 1870 and 1875 the preliminary inquest was taken out of the hands of independent examining magistrates and was handed to the ordinary police and the State police officers. No fewer than *seven hundred by-laws* have been issued since 1864 for tearing the Judicial Law to pieces—limiting the rights of the courts, abolishing trial by jury in numerous cases, and so on; so that—to use the expression of the Saratoff lawyers' meeting—“*all the principles of the law of Alexander the Second have been annihilated. This law exists only in name.*”

At the same time the exceptional laws promulgated during the last two reigns have given to every police officer, in every province of the Empire, the right to arrest every Russian subject without warrant, and to keep him imprisoned as a suspect for seven days—and much longer under various other pretexts—without incurring any responsibility. More than that. It was publicly vouched at one of the lawyers' meetings that when arrests were made *en masse*, simple policemen received in advance printed and signed warrants of arrest and searching, on which they have only to inscribe the names of the persons whom they choose to arrest! Let me add that all these resolutions and comments have been printed in full, in both the provincial and the Moscow papers, and that the figures are those of official reports.

At St. Petersburg the fortieth anniversary of the Judicial Law was celebrated by nearly 700 persons—lawyers, literary people, and so on—and their resolutions were equally outspoken.

The martyrology of the Judicial Law [they said] is a striking illustration of the fact that under the autocratic and bureaucratic *régime* which prevails in Russia the most elementary conditions of a regular civil life cannot be realized, and partial reforms of the present structure of the State would not attain their aim.

The Assembly confirmed therefore the resolutions of the Zemstvo representatives, only wording the chief ones still more definitely, in the following terms:

3. That all laws be made and taxes established only with the participation and the consent of representatives, freely elected by all the nation.

4. That the responsibility of the Ministers before the Assembly of Representatives of the nation should be introduced, in order to guarantee the legality of the actions and the orders of the Administration.

For this purpose, and in view of the extremely difficult conditions in which the country is now involved, the Assembly demanded the immediate convocation “of a Constituent Assembly, freely elected by the people,” and “a complete and unconditional amnesty for all political and religious offences,” as well as measures guaranteeing the freedom and the possibility of responsible elections, and also the inviolability of the representatives of the people. This declaration was signed by 673 persons, and sent to the Minister of the Interior.

The anniversary meetings of the Judicial Law being over, the agitation has already taken a new form. It is the municipalities, beginning with Moscow and St. Petersburg, which now pass the same resolutions. They ask

for the abolition of the exceptional laws and for the convocation of a representative Assembly, and they insist upon holding a general Conference of representatives of all the Russian cities and towns, which would certainly express the same desires.

It is evident that the reactionary party is also at work, and a meeting of reactionists took place at the house of Pobiedonostseff, in order to discuss how to put a stop to the constitutional movement. They will leave, of course, not a stone unturned to influence the Tsar in this direction, and, to begin with, they hit upon the idea of convoking meetings of the nobility in different provinces. They expected that such meetings would vote against a Constitution. But, beginning with Moscow, they met with a complete fiasco; the Moscow nobility adopted the same resolutions as the Zemstvos. More than that. A new movement was set on foot, in the old capital, in the same direction. A few days ago, at a meeting of the Moscow Agricultural Society, one of the members proposed a resolution demanding the abolition of the exceptional state-of-siege law promulgated in 1881. He met with some opposition, but after brilliant speeches had been pronounced in support of the resolution it was voted with only one dissentient.

One may expect now that many other societies, economic and scientific, will follow the example of the Moscow agriculturists. In the meantime the public libraries, both municipal and

supported by private contributions, have inaugurated a movement for demanding a release from the rigors of censorship. There is in Russia a special censorship for the libraries, and even out of those books which have been published in Russia with the consent of the censorship many works, chiefly historical and political, are not permitted to be kept in the circulating libraries. The Smolensk public library has now petitioned the Minister of the Interior asking for the abolition of these restrictions, and this petition is sure to be followed by many others of a similar kind, the more so as simply prohibitive restrictions are imposed upon the village libraries, the public lectures, and, in fact, in the whole domain of popular education.\*

It will be noticed that in all the above resolutions the form to be given to representative government has not yet been defined. Must Russia have two Houses or one? Will she have seven or nine Parliaments (like Canada) and a Federal Senate? What extension is to be given to the federative principle? And so on. All these matters have not yet been discussed in detail. It is only known that some Zemstvo delegates, under the presidency of M. Shipoff, are discussing these vital questions. However, as the Zemstvos exist in thirty-four provinces only, out of fifty, of European Russia proper, and there are besides Finland, Poland, the Caucasus, Siberia, Turkestan, and the Steppe Region, no scheme of representative government can be worked out without

\* Here is a resolution passed on the 9th of December by the Zadneprovsk public library at Smolensk, and published in the Russian papers:—"After having heard the statement of the committee concerning the difficulties standing in its way the meeting decided to ask from the Minister of Interior: (1) The abolition of the by-laws according to which the administration and the helpers of the library have to receive the investiture of the Government; (2) that all books allowed to circulate in Russia be allowed to be kept in

the library; (3) the abolition of censorship; (4) to permit educational societies to be opened after a mere notification. At the same time the meeting has entrusted its committee to inform the Minister of the Interior of its deep conviction that the spreading of education in the country is quite impossible without the rights and the dignity of the individual, and the liberty of conscience, speech, the Press, the associations and meetings being guaranteed."

the consent of these units. This is why the idea of a Constituent Assembly is gaining ground. All that can be said in the meantime is, that the Jacobinist ideas of the centralizers find but little sympathy in Russia, and that, on the contrary, the prevailing idea is that of a federation, with full home rule for its component parts, of which Finnish home rule may be taken as a practical illustration.

Such are, then, up to the 18th of December, the main facts of the constitutional agitation which is going on in Russia. And from all sides we hear the same questions: "Is it really the end of autocracy that is coming? Is Russia going to pass from autocracy to representative government, without a revolution similar to that of 1789 to 1793 in France? Is the present movement deep enough to attain its goal? And, again, are the Tsar and his nearest advisers prepared to make the necessary concessions, without being compelled to do so by popular uprisings and internal commotions?"

First of all, let it be well understood that there is nothing unforeseen in the demand of a Constitution, so unanimously expressed by the representatives of provincial self-government. Over and over again, for the last forty years, they have expressed the same desire, and it is for the third or fourth time that they now address similar demands to the Emperor. They did it in 1880-1881. They repeated it in 1894, as soon as Nicholas the Second came to the throne, and again in 1902 in connection with the Committees on the depression of agriculture. At the beginning of this year, when the war broke out and the Zemstvos decided to send their own field-hospitals to the seat of war (these hospitals, by the way, are described as the best in Manchuria), representatives of all the Zemstvos demanded the permission to meet together, to agree upon joint action in

the organization of relief for the wounded, as well as for the families of the Reservists. On both occasions the authorization was refused and the meetings forbidden; but on both occasions the Zemstvo delegates held secret conferences at Moscow and discussed their affairs in spite of the menaces of Plehve (Shipoff went for that into exile). And in both cases they concluded that the convocation of a National Assembly had become an imperative necessity. The present move is thus a further development of several former ones. It is the expression of a long-felt need.

The necessity of a representative government for Russia was spoken of immediately after the death of Nicholas the First, and we are informed by Prince Tatischeff (*Alexander the Second and his Times*) that as early as in 1856 Alexander the Second had had a plan of a Constitution worked out. However, precedence had to be given then to the abolition of serfdom and the terrible corporal punishments then in use (which meant a judicial reform); besides, some sort of local self-government had first to be created. These reforms filled up the years 1859-1866. But in the meantime the Polish revolution broke out (in 1863), and it was then believed at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the uprising was supported by promises of intervention given to its leaders by the Western Powers.

This revolution had the worst imaginable consequences for Russia. It closed the reform period. Reaction set in—the reaction which has lasted up to the present day, and which has cost Russia hecatombs of her best and most devoted men and women. All schemes of constitutional changes were abandoned, and we learn from the same author that the reason which Alexander the Second gave for this abandonment was his fear for the integrity of the

Empire. He came to Moscow in 1865, and there, at his Iliynsky Palace, he received Golohvastoff—that same President of Nobility in one of the districts of the Moscow province who had forwarded to the Tsar an address, in the name of the nobility he represented, demanding a Constitution. The words which Alexander is reported to have said to Golohvastoff during the interview are most characteristic: "I give you my word," he said, "that on this same table I would sign any Constitution you like if I were sure that this would be for the good of Russia. But I know that if I did it to-day, to-morrow Russia would go to pieces. And you do not desire such an issue. Last year you yourself [the Moscow nobility] told me that, and you were the first to say so."<sup>4</sup> There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of these words. They are just what Alexander the Second would have said, and while he was uttering them he was quite sincere. But, as I have explained in my *Memoirs*, his was a very complicated nature, and while the menace of the Western Powers, ready to favor the dismemberment of the Empire, must have strongly impressed him, the Autocrat also spoke in him, and still more so the man who demanded above all to be trusted implicitly. On this last point he was extremely sensitive.

Be that as it may, the idea of giving Russia a Constitution was temporarily abandoned; but it cropped up again ten years later. The great movement "towards the people" was then in full swing. The prisons were overflowing with political prisoners, and a series of political trials, which had taken place with open doors, had produced a

<sup>4</sup> They had asked indeed that the integrity of the Empire should be maintained, and that Poland should not be separated from Russia.

<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, his article in the "North American Review," September 1901, in which he threw the responsibility for the law in virtue of which students, for university dis-

deep impression on the public. Thereupon Alexander the Second handed in a scheme of a Constitution, to be reported upon to the Professor of Civil Law and the author of a book much spoken of on this subject—K. P. Pobledonostseff!

What the appreciations of Pobledonostseff were, we do not know; but, as he has expressed his views on representative government in a number of works, we may be certain that his report was negative. His ideal is a Church, as strongly organized as the Catholic Church, permeating all the life of society and assuming, if need be, a fighting attitude against the rival Churches. Freedom and Parliamentary rule are the enemies of such a Church; consequently, he concludes, autocracy must be maintained; and Russia is predestined to realize the happiness of the people under the rod of the Church. The worst was that Pobledonostseff succeeded for years in maintaining a reputation for honesty, and only lately has it become evident that, although he does not care for wealth, he cherishes power and is most unscrupulous as to the means by which he maintains his influence at Court.<sup>6</sup>

In 1876 Alexander the Second was thus besieged with doubts. But then came the uprising in Servia, the Turkish War, the Berlin Treaty, and once more the inner reforms were postponed. The Turkish War revealed, however, such depths of disorganization in the State machine that, once it was over, the time had apparently come for making a serious move in the constitutional direction. Discontent was general, and when the trial of "The Hundred and Ninety-three" be-

turbances, were marched as private soldiers to Port Arthur—a law of which, we now know, he himself was the promoter, and which led to such serious disturbances—upon the Minister of Public Instruction, already killed by a student, and the Minister of the Interior, who was killed soon after that by Balmashoff.

gan at the end of 1878, and full reports of it were given in the papers, the sympathies of the educated classes went all in favor of the accused, and all against their accusers. The moment was opportune; but one of those omnipotent functionaries who had been nurtured in the atmosphere of the Winter Palace, Trépoff, gave a different turn to affairs.

The history of the years 1878-1881 is so fresh in the memories of all that it need not be retold. How, immediately after the excitement produced at St. Petersburg by the above trial, Trépoff, the head of the St. Petersburg Police, ordered one of the "politicals" to be flogged in prison; how thereupon Véra Zasulitch shot at Trépoff, and wounded him; how Alexander the Second, inspired by the Chief of the State Police, Mézentsoff, revised the relatively mild sentences pronounced by the Court in the trial of "The Hundred and Ninety-three," and rendered them very much heavier; how, in reply to this, Mézentsoff was killed in broad daylight; and how this was the beginning of a fearful struggle between the Government and the revolutionists, which ended in a wholesale slaughter and transportation to Siberia of the best elements of a whole generation, including children sixteen years old, and in Alexander the Second losing his life—all this is well known. It is also known that he was killed the very day that he had made a timid and belated concession to public opinion by deciding to submit to the State Council a scheme for the convocation of an *Assemblée des Notables*.

This scheme is often described as a Constitution. But Alexander the Second himself never attributed to it this meaning. The proposal of Loris Melikoff, which received the approval of the Tsar on the 17th of February (March 1), 1881,

consisted in this: the Ministers were to bring together by the next autumn all the materials which they possessed concerning the reorganization of the Central Government. Then special Committees, composed of representatives of the different Ministries, as well as of persons invited by the Government for this purpose, would prepare schemes for reform of the Central Government "within the limits which would be indicated by the Emperor." These schemes, before submitting them to the State Council, would be discussed by a general Commission composed as follows: (a) Persons nominated by the Emperor out of members of the above Committees; (b) delegates from the provinces in which the Zemstvos have been introduced—two delegates per province, elected by the provincial Zemstvos—as also delegates from a few important cities; and (c) members nominated by the Government to represent the provinces which had no Zemstvo institutions. Only the members mentioned under (a) would have the right of voting; the others, (b) and (c), would only express their opinions, but not vote. The Commission itself would have no legislative power; its resolutions would be submitted to the State Council and the Emperor in the usual way.\*

This measure had to be made public, and on the 1st (13th) of March Alexander the Second approved the draft of a manifesto which had to be issued to this effect. He only desired it to be read at a meeting of the Committee of the Ministers on the following Wednesday. He was killed, as is well known, a few hours later, and the next Committee of Ministers, which took place on the 8th (20th) of March, was presided over by his son, Alexander the Third. The meeting fully approved the manifesto, which had now only to be

\* After the Council has voted, the Emperor decides himself whether he accepts the opinion of the majority or that of the minority. This opinion becomes the law.

printed. But Alexander the Third hesitated. Old Wilhelm the First had advised him to yield; but the reactionary party, headed by Pobledonostseff and Katkoff, was very active in the opposite direction. Katkoff was called from Moscow to exert a pressure on the Tsar by the side of Pobledonostseff, and Alexander was easily persuaded by Count Ignatieff and such a specialist in police matters as the *Préfet* of Paris, M. Andrieux, that the revolutionary movement could easily be crushed. Whilst all this was going on the Liberal Ministers, who were in favor of constitutional reforms, undertook nothing decisive, and Alexander the Third, who had already written to his brother: "I feel so happy: the weight is off my shoulders, I am granting a Constitution," yielded the other way. On the 29th of April (11th of May) he issued his autocratic manifesto, written by Pobledonostseff, in which he declared: "Amidst our affliction, the voice of God orders us to vigorously take the ruling power in our own hands, with faith in Providence and trust in the truth and might of the Autocratic Power which we are called upon to reinforce and to protect against all attacks, for the welfare of the nation."

One of the first acts of this personal power was the promulgation of that state-of-siege law which, as we saw, handed all classes of Russia to the now omnipotent police officials, and made of Russia one great State prison. Thus began those gloomy years 1881-1894, of which none of those who lived them through can think otherwise than as of a nightmare.

To tell the truth, Alexander the Third was not exactly a despot in his heart, although he acted like one. Under the influence of the Slavophile, Konstantin Aksakoff, he had come to believe that the mission of autocracy in Russia is to give a certain well-being

to the peasants, which could never be attained under a representative government. Towards the end of his life he even used to say that there were only two thorough Socialists, Henry the Fourth and himself. What induced him to say so I do not know. At any rate, when he came to the throne he adopted a programme which was explained in a French review, in an article generally attributed to Turgueneff.<sup>7</sup> Its main points were: a considerable reduction of the redemption tax which the ex-serfs paid for their liberation; a radical change in the system of imperial taxation, including the abolition of the "poll-tax," and the excise on salt: measures facilitating both the temporary migrations of the peasants and emigration to the Urals and Siberia; rural banks, and so on. Most of these measures were carried through during his reign; but in return the peasants were deprived of some of the most elementary personal and civil rights which they had obtained under Alexander the Second. Suffice it to say that instead of the Justices of the Peace, formerly elected by all the population, special police officers, nominated by the Governors, were introduced, and they were endowed with the most unlimited rights over the village communities, and over every peasant individually. Flogging, as in the times of serfdom, was made once more an instrument of "educating" the peasants. Every rural policeman became a governor of his village. The majority of the schools were handed over to Pobledonostseff. As to the Zemstvos, not only were they gradually transformed more and more into mere boards of administration under the local Governor, but the peasants were deprived of the representation which they hitherto had in that institution.

<sup>7</sup> See Stepiak's "King Stork and King Log: a Study of Modern Russia." 2 vols. London (Downey & Co.), 1896, pp. 22 "seq."

The police officers became even more omnipotent than ever. If a dozen schoolmasters came together they were treated as conspirators. The reforms of 1861-1866 were treated as the work of rank revolutionists, and the very name of Alexander the Second became suspect. Never can a foreigner realize the darkness of the cloud which hung over Russia during that unfortunate reign. It is only through the deep note of despair sounded in the novels and sketches of Tchékoff and several of his contemporaries—"the men of the eighties"—that one can get a faint idea of that gloom.

However, man always hopes, and as soon as Nicholas the Second came to the throne new hopes were awakened. I have spoken of these hopes in the pages of this Review, and shown how soon they faded away. Since then Nicholas the Second has not shown the slightest desire to repair any one of the grave faults of his father, but he has added very many new ones.

Everywhere he and his Ministers have bred discontent—in Finland, in Poland, in Armenia (by plundering the Armenian Church), in Georgia, in the Zemstvos, among all those who are interested in education, among the students—in fact, everywhere. But that is not all. There is one striking feature in this reign. All these last ten years there has been no lack of forces which endeavored to induce the ruler of Russia to adopt a better policy; and all through these ten years *he himself*—so weak for good—found the force to *resist* them. At the decisive moment he always had enough energy to turn the scales in favor of reaction by throwing in the weight of his own personal will. Every time he interfered in public matters—be it in the student affairs, in Finland, or when he spoke so insolently to the Zemstvo delegates on his advent to the throne—every time his interference was for bad.

However, already during the great strikes of 1895, and still more so during the student disturbances of 1897, it had become apparent that the old régime could not last long. Notwithstanding all prosecutions, a quite new Russia had come into existence since 1881. In the seventies it was only the youth which revolted against the old régime. In our circles a man of thirty was an old man. In 1897 men of all ages, even men like Prince Viazemskiy, member of the Council of State, or the Union of Writers, and thousands of elderly men scattered all over the country, joined in a unanimous protest against the autocratic bureaucracy.

It was then that Witte began to prepare the gradual passage from autocracy to some sort of a constitutional régime. His Commissions on the Impoverishment of Agriculture in Central Russia were evidently meant to supply that intermediate step. In every district of the thirty-four provinces which have the Zemstvo institutions, Committees, composed of the Zemstvos and of local men invited *ad hoc*, were asked to discuss the causes of this impoverishment. Most remarkable things were said in these Committees, by noblemen and functionaries, and especially by simple peasants—all coming to one conclusion: Russia cannot continue to exist under the police rule which was inaugurated in 1881. Political liberties and representative government have become a most urgent necessity. "We have something to say about our needs, and we will say it"—this was what peasant and landlord alike said in these Commissions. The convocation of an Assembly of the representatives of all provinces of Russia had thus become unavoidable. But then Nicholas the Second, under the instigation and with the connivance of Plehve, made his little *coup d'état*. Witte was shelved in the Council of State, and Plehve became an omnipo-

tent satrap. However, it is now known that in 1902 Plehve had handed to Nicholas the Second a memoir in which he accused Witte of preparing a revolutionary movement in Russia, and already then the Tsar had decided in his mind to get rid of Witte and his Commissions. This he did, handing Russia to that man whom the worst reactionists despised, even though they called upon him to be their saviour.

An orgy of insolent police omnipotence now began: the wholesale deportation of all dissentients; massacres of the Jews, of which the instigators, such as the Moldavian Krushevian, editor of the *Bessarabets*, were under the personal protection of the Minister; an orgy of wholesale bribery, general corruption, and intimidation. And Nicholas the Second had not one word to say against that man! Only now, when Plehve's successors have brought to the Tsar the copies of all his Majesty's correspondence with the Grand Dukes, which Plehve opened and had carefully copied for some unknown purpose—only now they go about in the Winter Palace exclaiming: "It is Plehve who is the cause of all that agitation! It is he who has brought upon us all this odium!" As if Plehve was not *their* last hope—the last card of autocracy! Truly has the lawyer Korobchevsky said before the Court, in defence of his client Sazonoff: "The bomb which killed the late Minister of the Interior was filled, not with dynamite, but with the burning tears of the mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters of the men whom he sent to the gallows or to die slowly in prison or in Siberia!"

But who are these new men of the Zemstvos—it will be asked—who come now so prominently to the front? Are they capable of playing the responsible part which history seems to bestow upon them?

When provincial self-government was

introduced forty years ago there certainly was among the promoters of this reform some sort of idea like this: "Let the landlords, the merchants, the peasants, familiarize themselves, through the provincial and the district assemblies, with representative government and the management of public affairs." This is also how the reform was understood on the spot, and this is why the Zemstvos attracted at the outset so many of the best provincial forces.

The mode of composition of these assemblies is original. Russia, as is known, is divided into provinces, and each province into ten to twelve districts. Leaving aside Poland (ten provinces), Finland (which has its own Parliament), Caucasia and Asiatic Russia (Siberia, Turkestan, the Steppe Region), European Russia is divided into fifty provinces, out of which thirty-four have now the institution of the Zemstvo. This means that in these provinces each district has an assembly, elected by all the inhabitants, for the management of quite a number of local matters. Each assembly nominates its own executive, and all the district assemblies nominate a Provincial Assembly, which also has its executive, and is presided over by the provincial President of the Nobility. The towns have their own municipal government. The district elections, however, are made separately by the three "orders"—the nobility, the mixed landowners (merchants and peasant proprietors), and the peasants belonging to the village communities. Besides, as the foundation of the electoral rights is the value of landed property owned by each person in the district, and the nobility are the chief landowners, the result is that in most assemblies the number of peasant representatives is inferior to those of the other two orders taken together. Only in certain north-eastern provinces such as Vyatka

have the peasants a dominating voice. This is, at least, how the Zemstvos were constituted till 1890, when the would-be "Peasant Tsar" further reduced the number of peasant delegates.

It would seem that under such an organization the Zemstvos would soon become mere administrative boards, on which the country squires would find a number of well-paid positions. So it was indeed at the outset in some central provinces, where the landlords of the old school had the upper hand. But on the other hand there were also provinces, such as Tver (an old nest of "Decembrists"), Voronezh, Poltava, partly Ryazán, &c., in which the nobility, owing to various circumstances, took the lead of the reform movement. In these provinces, as also in the north-eastern ones, in which the peasants dominate, the Zemstvos became an active force for introducing in the villages all sorts of useful institutions on a democratic basis. These two sorts of Zemstvos became the leaders of the others. This is why, notwithstanding all the obstacles opposed to them by the Central Government, the Zemstvos, as a rule, have accomplished something. They have laid the foundation of a rational system of popular education. They have placed sanitation in the villages on a sound basis, and worked out the system which answers best the purpose of free medical help for the peasants and the laboring classes. They elected Justices of Peace who were decidedly popular. And some of the Zemstvos are doing good work by spreading in the villages better methods of agriculture, by the supply of improved machinery at cost price, by spreading cooperative workshops and creameries, by mutual in-

surance, by introducing school gardens, and so on. All this, of course, within the narrow limits imposed by the present economical conditions, but capable, like similar beginnings in Western Europe, of a considerable extension.

Another important feature is that the Zemstvos draw into their service a considerable number of excellent men, truly devoted to the people, who in their turn exercise a decided influence upon the whole of the Zemstvo institution. Here is a country district in North-Western Russia. Its district assembly consists of twenty noblemen elected by the nobility, one deputy from the clergy (nominated by the Church), one functionary of the Crown (who sits by right), five deputies elected by the second "order" of mixed land-owners (merchants, peasant proprietors, &c.), and nine peasants from the third "order," representing the village communities.\* They decide, let us say, to open a number of village schools. But the salaries of the teachers are low, the schoolmasters' houses are poor log-huts, and the assembly people know that nobody but a "populist," who loves the people and looks upon his work as upon his mission, will come and stay. And so the "populist" comes in as a teacher. But it is the same with the Zemstvo doctor, who is bound to attend to a number of villages. He has to perform an incredible amount of work, travelling all the year round, every day, from village to village, over impassable roads, amidst a poverty which continually brings him to despair—read only Tchekoff's novels! And, therefore, nobody but a "populist" will stay. And it is the same with the midwife, the doctor's aid, the agricultural inspector, the co-operator, and so on. And when

\* Taking a district of North-Eastern Russia where, owing to the small number of nobles, the first two "orders" vote together, we have three functionaries of the Crown sitting by

right, twelve members elected by the first two orders (three nobles, the remainder are merchants, &c.), and seven peasants representing the village communities.

several Zemstvos undertook, with their limited budgets, to make house-to-house statistical inquests in the villages, whom could they find but devoted "populists" to carry on the work and to build up that wonderful monument, the 450 volumes of the Zemstvo inquests? Read Oertel's admirable novel, *Changing Guards*, and you will understand the force which these teachers, doctors, statisticians, &c., represent in a province.

The more the Zemstvos develop their activity, the more this "third element" grows; and now it is they—the men and women on the spot, who toil during the snowstorm and amidst a typhus-stricken population—who speak for the people and make the Zemstvo speak and act for it. A new Russia has grown in this way. And this Russia hates autocracy, and makes the Zemstvos hate it with a greater hatred than any which would have sprung from theories borrowed from the West. At every step every honest man of the Zemstvo finds the bureaucracy—dishonest, ignorant, and arrogant—standing in his way. And if these men shout, "Down with autocracy!" it is because they know by experience that autocracy is incompatible with real progress.

These are, then, the various elements which are arraigned in Russia against the old institutions. Will autocracy yield, and make substantial concessions—in time, because time plays an immense part under such conditions? This we do not know. But that they never will be able any more to stop the movement, this is certain. It is said that they think at the Winter Palace to pass a few measures in favor of the peasants, but to avoid making any constitutional concessions. However, this will not help. Any improvement in the condition of the peasants will be welcome. But if they think that therefore they will be able to limit

their concessions to the invitation of a few representatives of the provinces to the Council of State, where they may take part in its deliberations, this is a gross mistake. Such a measure might have pacified the minds of 1881, if Alexander the Third had honestly fulfilled the last will of his father. It might have had, perhaps, some slight effect ten years ago, if Nicholas the Second had listened then to the demand of the Zemstvos. But now this will do no longer. The energy of the forces set in motion is too great to be satisfied with such a trifling result. And if they do not make concessions very soon, the Court party may easily learn the lesson which Louis Philippe learned in the last days of February 1848. In those days the situation at Paris changed every twenty-four hours, and therefore the concessions made by the Ministry always came too late. Each time they answered no longer to the new requirements.

In all the recent discussions nothing has yet been said about the terrible economical conditions of the peasants and the working men in the factories. All the resolutions were limited to a demand of political rights, and thus they seem to imply that the leading idea of the agitation was to obtain, first, political rights, and to leave the discussion of the economical questions to the future representative Government. If this were so, I should see in such a one-sidedness the weak point of the agitation. However, we have already in the resolutions of the committees on the Impoverishment of Central Russia a wide programme of changes, required by the peasants themselves, and it would be of the greatest importance to circulate this programme at once in the villages.

It is quite certain that every Russian—even the poorest of the peasants—is interested in the destruction of the secular political yoke to which all Rus-

sia is harnessed. But the destruction of that yoke, if it has to be done in reality, and not on paper only, is an immense work, which cannot be accomplished unless all classes of society, and especially the toiling classes, join in it. Autocracy has its outgrowths in every village. It is even probable that no progress in the overthrow of that institution will be made so long as the peasant masses do not bring their insurrections to bear upon the decisions of the present rulers. They must be told, therefore, frankly and openly by

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the educated classes, what the intentions of the latter are concerning the great problem which is now at this very moment facing millions of Russian peasants: "How to live till the next crop?" Let us hope, therefore, that those who have started the present agitation with so much energy will also see that they must tell the ninety million Russian peasants the improvements in the economical conditions of the toiling masses which they can expect under the new *régime*, in addition to the acquisition of political rights.

*P. Kropotkin.*

#### RECOLLECTIONS OF ARTHUR SULLIVAN.

There is sound sense in one of the rules laid down by the Sacred College that no member of the Catholic Church, however saintly their lives may have been, however venerable their reputation may be at the time of their death, can be canonized till half-a-century at least has come and gone since they joined the majority. I have often wished that a similar unwritten law could be enforced with respect to biographies. Nowadays, and especially in our own country, no man who has made any mark in his day is considered by his friends or relatives to have received due recognition of his services unless a bulky biography is published containing full and appreciative records of his private life and his public career. In the case of men of eminence, such as Mr. Gladstone, who have taken a leading share in politics an exception may fairly be made. After all, they are part and parcel of their country's history, and memoirs written by contemporaries, and published while their memory was still green, may be useful for historians of a future day, whose duty it will be to narrate the true story of our time.

I confess, however, that, in my opinion, biographies of men of mark in science, literature, or art had better, with very rare exception, be left unwritten till the judgment of posterity has confirmed the estimate placed on them by their contemporaries. Their works survive them; and by these works they must in the end be judged. Of late years, however, hardly a week passes without the issue of some elaborate biography narrating the sayings and doings of minor politicians, public officials, men of letters, clerics, and artists who doubtless played creditable parts in their respective careers, but who are never likely to be known, even by name, when their own generation has been gathered to its fathers.

In the category of biographies that, as I hold, might have well been left unwritten I should include the memoir of Sir Arthur Sullivan whose author is Mr. Findon. I find no fault with the biography as it stands, except that it contains certain strictures on third parties which might give unnecessary pain should they be regarded as representing the personal opinions of Sir Arthur. I agree—in as far as I am

competent to do so—with the views expressed by Mr. Findon as to Sullivan's high musical attainments, and I believe the recital of the meagre incidents of Sullivan's public career is substantially correct. My objection to the memoir is that it fails to make its readers acquainted with the man as he was known to those who knew him otherwise than by repute. I attribute this failure not so much to any deficiency on the part of Mr. Findon as to the inherent difficulties of the task. When all is said and done, there is little to be written about the life of Arthur Sullivan, as known to the outer world, except in connection with his career as a musician and a composer. No educated man can be more hopelessly ignorant of the art of music than I am myself, but from my literary and journalistic experience I have learnt thus much: that it is the rarest thing in the newspaper world to find a musical critic who can write about musical subjects in such a way as to make his criticisms interesting or even intelligible to the non-musical public. I am not cognizant—though on this, as in all matters connected with music, I speak with the greatest hesitation—of any biography of a celebrated British musician which has enrolled itself amidst the standard classics of British literature. Whether this is due to the fault of the biographers, of the subject matter of the biographies, or of the reading public, is a question I am incompetent to answer. Be the cause what it may, there can, I think, be no doubt as to the fact.

These remarks pretty well exhaust all I have to say on the Life of Sir Arthur Sullivan which has recently been published. What I have to say further applies to Sullivan rather as a man than as a musician. The first time I made his acquaintance was, curiously enough, in connection with musical criticism. Some thirty odd

years ago, I had undertaken the editorship of the *Observer* newspaper, which at that period stood in sore need of reorganization. In those bygone days, I remember my old friend E. L. Blanchard remarking to me "that the one faculty required for dramatic and musical criticism was a copious repertory of complimentary adjectives." Unmindful of this advice, I thought the public might appreciate a more independent tone of musical criticism than was then in vogue. There being a vacancy in the post of musical critic of the *Observer*, I called on Arthur Sullivan, to ascertain whether he was disposed to write the musical criticisms for the *Observer*. He accepted the proposal subject to the understanding that either of us remained at liberty to terminate the engagement if for any reason it should prove unsatisfactory. Shortly afterwards a new opera by an almost unknown but not impecunious composer was brought out in London, and on the following Sunday Sullivan's notice appeared in our columns. I was personally much struck with the article. The style was as clear as the handwriting—and to those who knew Sullivan's writing at this period of his life that is saying a good deal. I have forgotten, or do not trouble myself to recall, the names of the opera and its composer. All I care to remember is that the criticism was distinctly unfavorable, and formed a marked contrast to the wishy-washy eulogistic notices which appeared in most of our contemporaries, and in consequence it attracted a certain amount of attention. Within a few days of its appearance I received intimations to the effect that this style of criticism was viewed with disfavor in the quarters whence musical advertisements were issued, and that the continuance of such criticisms would involve the withdrawal of the musical advertisements. I had to consider other people's interests as well as

my own, and I came at once to the conclusion that—to put the matter plainly—the game was not worth the candle. It was, as I held, no part of my duty as an editor to elevate the tone of musical criticism, and I entertained grave doubts as to whether there was a sufficient public interested in musical notices to increase our circulation to such an extent as would have compensated us for the money loss accruing from the withdrawal of operatic and concert advertisements. I had therefore no option except to discharge the somewhat unpleasant task of informing Sullivan that I had determined to discontinue his notices. Nothing could be more charming than the way in which he received my communication. He assured me that he appreciated fully the reasons of my action, and added that he had already entertained doubts as to whether it was prudent for him, as a musician himself, to criticise in print members of his own profession. We parted on the friendliest terms. The article in question was, to the best of my belief, the one and only musical criticism which Sullivan ever contributed to the Press, and I can say with even greater certainty that it was the one and only attempt ever made by me to improve the status of British music as an art.

This incident—which with another man might easily have led to a permanent estrangement—formed the commencement of a lifelong friendship. I learnt from it how singularly free Sullivan was from the personal vanity which is often said to be inseparable from the artistic nature. I realized how fair-minded and how sensible he was in business matters. I discerned the sweetness of temper, the kindness of heart, and the affectionate disposition which rendered him so charming a companion, so true a friend.

My intimate acquaintance with Sullivan was, however, brought about by

our having a common friend in the person of Frederick Clay, the son of James Clay, then M.P. for Hull. Memories are so short-lived in the world in which we both passed many years of our lives that I am afraid to many of my readers the name of Fred Clay will be well-nigh unknown. At the period of which I speak, he was a clerk in the Treasury, and acting as private secretary to George Glyn, the Whip of Mr. Gladstone's first Administration, who, later on, succeeded his brother as Lord Wolverton. Clay was, I have reason to know, a most efficient secretary, and would in all likelihood have risen very high in the public service if he had not insisted on resigning his clerkship upon his father's death. Fortunately or unfortunately, as one may choose to think, he had—or believed he had—sufficient means to live in comfort without his official salary, and was anxious to devote himself to the study of music, to which he was passionately attached. He had before this published a number of songs, some of which had attracted considerable notice. I have often heard Sullivan express an opinion that Fred Clay had higher musical talent than he himself possessed, and might have been a great musician if he had ever devoted himself seriously to the study of the art. Sullivan was singularly free from any professional jealousies, and was perhaps inclined to overestimate the talents of his friends. However this may be, Clay applied himself to music too late to make any real progress, and soon involved himself in pursuits fatal to serious study of any kind. The story of a wasted life is one sad to read, sadder still to tell. After many losses and disappointments, borne with imperturbable cheeriness, the tide seemed to have turned for a moment in Fred Clay's favor. He had been commissioned to write the music for a spectacular piece brought out at the

Alhambra. The first night's performance was a decided success. On the following evening he dined with me at the Garrick Club, when he was in far better spirits than I had seen him for a long time. On the same evening he was struck down with paralysis, and from that time to the end of his days his life was a living death. The cruellest part of a cruel fate was that his mind remained active while the means of expressing his thoughts by speech or writing or gestures was almost taken from him. In the last communication I ever received from him he asked me to propose as an honorary member of the Garrick Club an American visitor to England who had shown him much hospitality during his own sojourn in the United States. The letter was signed in a sprawling hand utterly unlike his beautiful handwriting of former days, but still recognizable, and was signed, "Poor old Freddy." The words have always seemed to me his fittest epitaph.

Sullivan and Clay were united by a very close intimacy, by a common love for music, and by the attraction they mutually exercised over one another. Clay was then living with his father, and by his invitation I became a frequent visitor to his house in Montagu Square, and there got to know Sullivan more closely than I should have done otherwise. Fred Clay was then a very well-known personage in all classes of London society, and was liked by everybody, loved by many. No doubt Arthur's high professional reputation would have ultimately got him the entry into any society he wished to frequent. But he was not the kind of man who wears his heart upon his sleeve; he had a certain reluctance to putting himself forward on his own initiative; and I fancy that Fred Clay was the immediate instrument of Arthur's introduction to general society. Whether this introduction was bene-

ficial or otherwise to his professional progress may be open to question. It is certain, however, that the knowledge of the political, fashionable, and financial worlds, for which Sullivan was to a certain extent indebted to Fred Clay, saved him from the narrowness of view which, as a rule, characterizes all musicians, actors, and painters who associate exclusively with members of their own profession. This much I can say with certainty, that Sullivan never forgot the friendship that had existed for many years between himself and the Clay family. He never spoke of Fred without affection, and showed his affection, to the best of my belief, in more substantial ways than in mere kindly greetings.

I am not sure that the accident which associated him with the author of the *Bab Ballads* in the production of the Savoy musical plays was an unmixed advantage to Sullivan as a musician. From a pecuniary point of view the association was a brilliant success; but I fancy the great reputation which accrued to Sullivan as the musical partner in the Gilbert-Sullivan-d'Oyly Carte firm militated to some extent against the recognition of his claims to be regarded as one of the past-masters of musical art. The British public is apt to identify any member of the artistic professions with the particular style of art in connection with which his name has become a household word; and I am inclined to think that the reputation which Sullivan earned as the composer of *Pinafore*, *The Mikado*, and *The Yeomen of the Guard* told against the full recognition of his classical works, such as *The Martyr of Antioch* and *The Golden Legend*. If I am not gravely mistaken, this opinion was that of the man most competent to judge—Sullivan himself. Never was there a man less inclined to sing his own praises, to complain of his own grievances, or to speak disparagingly of his

own colleagues. During the period when he was half worried out of his life by the dissension between his partners in the Savoy venture, I never heard him say a word concerning his coadjutors, other than friendly and appreciative. I knew, however, that throughout the latter years of his life he was under the impression that British musicians, as a body, had never quite done justice to the eminence he had attained as a composer throughout the civilized world, and that it was owing to the lack of hearty recognition on their part that he had never obtained the meed of praise to which the higher class of his musical compositions had entitled him so deservedly. His disappointment at the comparatively scanty appreciation bestowed upon *Ivanhoe* was felt keenly by Sullivan, not so much for himself as for the art he loved so well. He attached an importance to the development of musical art in our English land which I, as an utter ignoramus in musical matters, could hardly understand. But I knew him too intimately not to be aware that he believed in music as a necessary concomitant of national greatness, and worshipped his art with the reverence of an ardent believer, if not of a fanatic. The one failure of his professional career, the collapse of the English Opera Company, was a source of bitter disappointment to him, not so much from the personal loss he sustained thereby, as from the frustration of his hopes that an English opera, in which the composers would be English and the artists would be English also, might become a national institution. I have seldom known a man who bore so cheerfully as Arthur Sullivan losses which only affected his pocket. It so happened I was with him on the morning when he received the news that a financial firm conducted by a personal friend of his own, and to whom he had entrusted a very large

amount of money, had stopped payment, and that his money, as the event proved, was irretrievably lost. His first impulse was to express his sorrow for the friend who was the cause of his losses; he uttered no futile reproaches or idle complaint. The only comment I recall his making was that it was hard lines he should have learnt the misfortune on the morning of the day when he had to conduct the orchestra at the Savoy on the occasion of his first performance of a new piece; I think it was *Princess Ida*. I myself had been a loser by the bankruptcy, though happily to a comparatively small extent, and the subject was one which we had frequently to discuss at subsequent periods. But to the best of my recollection I never heard him utter an unkindly word on the subject of his losses or concerning those who were responsible for the catastrophe. This is the more remarkable as his organization was extremely sensitive alike to pain or pleasure.

In the year 1893, if my memory is correct, he was invited by his old friend, the late Sir Frederick Leighton, as President of the Royal Academy, to be the guest of the Academicians at their annual dinner. In addition he was requested to respond to the toast of music, which, for the first time in the annals of the Academy, was to be acknowledged as a sister art with painting and sculpture. Sullivan, to my thinking, attached a somewhat exaggerated importance to the invitation. The Academy dinners are, to speak the truth, neither more nor less than trade banquets, to which the Academicians invite their patron-customers, and throw in a certain limited number of political and social celebrities, just as careful cooks insert a few plums into a pudding to make it appetizing. If I may venture to say so, the Royal Academy had far more cause to be proud of having Sullivan

as their guest than the latter had of being the guest of the former. He wrote begging me to come and dine with him, and to bring with me a draft speech. I have had some little experience in my life of drafting strings of appropriate commonplaces for after-dinner orations, and I put together a reply which seemed to me adequate for the occasion. I found, however, that Sullivan was absolutely indifferent to the personal aspect of the question. His one wish was to lay stress upon the fact that the Royal Academy had at last recognized the claim of English music to be represented at their banquets, and had thereby removed a sort of stigma which he had long resented. We sat up till very late at night concocting and revising the speech which he ultimately delivered. To my mind, the views expressed in the revised speech were those of a musical enthusiast; but the dream—if dream it was—of being the founder of a school of British music was one to which Sullivan remained faithful to the end of his life.

I dwell on this phase of Sullivan's character because it seems to me there is a tendency on the part of his contemporary critics to represent him as a musician who had deserted the higher walks of his art for the lower, who had sacrificed his ideal for the sake of money easily earned and of a reputation cheaply purchased. I hold this view of his character to be erroneous, and I trust that whenever his true life can be written the writer will not fail to bring out the steady labor he devoted to his art, the earnestness with which he sought to extend its influence and to advance its interests.

It is undoubtedly true that a portion of Sullivan's daily life was spent in clubs, and often in their card-rooms. But yet—and this is a point on which I am far more competent to form an opinion than on the most elementary

musical question—he was never, in my opinion, a true clubman. By nature and disposition he was essentially domestic. His home, his books, his pictures, his dogs and birds, his household, had a sort of personal attraction which they rarely possess for men of the world, worldly. As a rule, he preferred dining at home to dining at the various clubs to which he belonged, in all of which he was a welcome visitor. His dinners to his intimate friends, about which he took any amount of personal trouble, were held, with rare exceptions, in his own flat in Victoria Street, not at restaurants or clubs. It was often a marvel to me why, being what he was, he never married; but somehow or other he remained single to the end of his life, though I have grounds to believe that he more than once seriously contemplated matrimony. All that I or any of his friends can state on this subject is a conviction that if he had ever married he would have proved the most affectionate of husbands, the kindest of parents. He was greatly sought after in society, and it is a complete illusion to imagine, as I have seen hinted in comments on his career, that he wasted in amusement the time he might have employed to greater advantage in the study of his art. As long as his health lasted, he worked hard throughout the day, and it was only in the evenings he was seen much abroad, and when dinner was over he was not unfrequently to be found in club card-rooms. The art of musical composition, if carried out with the earnestness and energy Sullivan devoted to it, involves, in as far as my observation goes, high mathematical ability; and anyone who watched Sullivan's play, as I have often had the opportunity of doing, could not but perceive that he played his cards thoughtfully and intelligently. He was, I think, a bad card-holder, and, in common with most

men whose minds throughout the day are occupied with graver subjects, he was a careless player. Moreover, though he liked winning, as all card-players do, he was singularly indifferent to losing. I fancy, also, that his innate tenderness of nature rendered him instinctively averse to continue playing when the run of luck happened to be in his favor, or when he thought he was winning more than his adversaries could afford to lose. For all these reasons, in spite of his clear brain and his keen memory and his remarkable power of calculating chances, he was an indifferent card-player from a pecuniary point of view. The plain truth, as I take it, is that he played mainly because he found that play rested his mind after the day's labors, not because he was greedy of gain. If this was so, it is intelligible enough that he should not have held his own against men of relatively inferior mental ability who played to win. Still, I do not believe that his losses in the London clubs he belonged to were ever serious, as compared with his income; and this much I can truly say, that, whatever he may have lost or won, he secured the personal affection of all his fellow-players to an extent rare amidst seasoned men of the world, though not—as my own experience has shown me—so rare amidst card-players as amidst the followers of other and perhaps more elevated pursuits.

No man I have ever known—if I may paraphrase John Morley's saying about Mr. Chamberlain—had “so perfect a genius for kindness.” He had no great belief, if I am not mistaken, in promiscuous charity, or in public subscriptions to benevolent institutions. His view was that the world would be a far better place than it is now if every individual ceased to concern himself about futile attempts to redress wholesale evils, such as poverty and sick-

ness, by private benevolence, and devoted his attention to assisting, relieving, and showing kindness to his own people, to his personal friends, to his fellow-workers, to his household, and to all the persons who, in the scriptural sense of the word “neighbor,” were by the accidents of life more of neighbors to him than anyone else. Many of us—I myself amidst the number—hold this view, but I fear very few of us strive to act up to it as fully as did Sullivan. I recollect some years ago, when *The Mikado* was at the height of its success, overhearing a conversation between some chorus girls who were returning from the Savoy by the District Railway, and were discussing the merits and demerits of the actors and managers of the theatre. One of them concluded with the remark: “Well, whatever you may say about the others, there is one person we are all fond of, and that is Arthur Sullivan. He never passes one of us girls without saying a kind word; and he never hears of any one of us being ill or in trouble without doing something to help us.” I repeated this saying afterwards to Sullivan, and his remark was, “I am glad you told me. This is how I should like all who come into relations with me to feel towards me.”

It may be said that this sort of open-handed liberality comes easy to any man of kindly, careless disposition, who gives freely to all who ask him. The qualities which make a man a spendthrift make him also liberal and even lavish in his dealings with others. But with Sullivan this was not so. No man was so fond of making presents, but at the same time no man bestowed so much thought beforehand on the presents he made and the persons he assisted. The perusal of his diaries will convince anyone who had previously entertained a contrary opinion, that—in the usual sense of the term—there was

nothing Bohemian about the life of Arthur Sullivan. His accounts were kept most carefully; well-nigh every incident of his daily life for some thirty years is recorded in his diaries; every important letter he wrote and every application he received are mentioned therein. Even here in these private annals the names of his correspondents are alluded to by initials. Altogether, if you were to judge of Sullivan solely by his diaries, without any extraneous knowledge, you would come inevitably to the conclusion that he was a singularly careful, level-headed man of business.

I had the great advantage of spending some months in daily companionship with Arthur Sullivan. My experience of life has impressed upon me the conviction that a few weeks of fellow-travel abroad give two persons a fuller knowledge of each other than they would acquire under ordinary circumstances by as many years of close intimacy at home. Even in a journey conducted with every possible comfort and convenience, the first condition of the journey proving a success is that of the two travellers proving congenial to one another. Given such congenialship, any of the little *contretemps* which must occur in the best regulated of journeys creates nothing beyond a passing annoyance. Without such congenialship any untoward incident becomes a source of permanent irritation. If I were called upon to express an opinion—as Mr. George Meredith seems to have considered it is his duty to do—on the “great marriage question,” I should suggest that in an ideal commonwealth no man and woman should be allowed to embark on matrimony till they had acquired previous experience of each other’s characters by a period of fellow-travelling. I confess my inability to work out the idea thus suggested; but I am convinced it is more practical and less Utopian than

Mr. Meredith’s proposal, that all marriages should be terminable after a decennial period of connubial life.

Be this as it may, the conviction I have already expressed—that if the incidents of his career had been other than they were Arthur Sullivan would have proved eminently qualified to enjoy and impart domestic happiness as the master of a household and the father of a family—was confirmed by the three months we spent together in Cairo in 1882. He was so reasonable, so considerate of others in small matters as well as in great, so anxious to give pleasure, so happy when he succeeded in so doing, that a man must have been a churl indeed who, having had the privilege of being his fellow-traveller for any length of time, could fail to entertain towards him a sentiment of lifelong regard and affection.

The time we spent together in Egypt was one of singular interest. It was the last year of the Dual Control under which the Khedivial administration was virtually controlled by the then Mr. Auckland Colvin and M. de Blignières, as the respective representatives of England and France. Arabi had exchanged the position of an unknown and obscure Fellah for that of Minister of War, and, in the hands of native and European advisers of far higher ability than himself, had come forward as the champion of Egyptian independence. In those days Cairo still retained the cosmopolitan character which rendered its society so attractive to a visitor. Socially, the French element was still supreme and French was the language of ordinary conversation in Cairene society. The Arabi movement, though it received no direct countenance from the French officials, was warmly supported by the French colony, who imagined that his crusade in favor of “Egypt for the Egyptians” would undermine British influence in the valley of the Nile and restore the

old supremacy of France. Shepheard's Hotel was still the headquarters of the English visitors, and the ordinary tranquillity of that somewhat somnolent hostelry was disturbed by the agitation on behalf of Arabi conducted by two English gentlemen—my friend the late Sir William Gregory and Mr. Wilfred Blunt. There was a general feeling of thunder in the air, and the outbreak of the military mutiny which culminated in the bombardment of Alexandria and the victory of Tel-el-Kebir was preceded by a series of hostile demonstrations, disturbances in the streets, popular outcries against all foreigners in general and all English foreigners in particular. There were any number of acrimonious controversies, personal disputes, challenges and threats of duels. Altogether the situation was one in which a visitor strange to the country might easily have got himself into trouble without any wish to give offence. I was surprised at the keen interest displayed by Sullivan in the *imbroglio* then agitating Cairo, and I had some fear that his staunch loyalty to England might get him into trouble. I have neither the space nor the inclination to enter upon certain social complications which formed the main topic of interest at Cairo during the period of Sullivan's visit. That, in Rudyard Kipling's phrase, "is another story," and I see no good in recalling the memory of a well-nigh forgotten scandal, in which the part played by some fellow-countrymen of our own showed a lack certainly of self-respect and possibly of courage. Anyhow, that conduct did not commend itself to the approval of the foreigners resident in Egypt, and the comments made by them gave just umbrage to British feeling. In Sullivan's diary I find this passage with reference to some imputations he had overheard upon our British standard of honor: "When I hear such things said it makes my blood boil." But my

observation of the tact, good sense, and temper which characterized his persistent endeavors to promote an amicable settlement of an unfortunate and ill-advised dispute did credit to his head as well as to his heart, and led me for the first time to fully realize the sound, shrewd judgment which formed the basis of his character.

The Cairo of 1882 was, in social respects, entirely different from the Cairo of to-day. Nowadays, during the season there are balls every night, polo matches, golf contests, races, and gymkhanas well-nigh every weekday. Indeed, the life led by the English visitors to Egypt is—making allowance for difference of climate—almost identical with that led by the denizens of Mayfair and Belgravia during the London season. A score of years ago there were only, as a rule, one or two balls throughout the season, and a few official dinners followed by formal receptions. Most of the Consuls-General and of the leading European officials in the Khedivial service had a night on which their friends might call without any special invitation. "Bezique" and "Nap" were the games then in vogue; the stakes were very low, and the card-parties broke up early so that everybody might be in bed by midnight. Indeed, if my memory is correct, the street lamps in those days were extinguished by eleven.

No man ever entered more heartily into the life of cosmopolitan Cairo than Arthur Sullivan. His name alone was a passport to every house in Cairo, whether British, French, German, Greek, or Levantine. I told him before we started that it was useless to ask for introductions, as everybody in Cairo and Alexandria would be glad to welcome him as their guest. My anticipation proved correct, as within a few days of his arrival he knew everybody in the political and commercial capitals of Egypt worth knowing. No doubt

a similar welcome would in those days have been extended to every artist of European reputation who came as a visitor to the land of the Pharaohs. But in a short time the charm of Sullivan's individual personality weighed more in his favor than his fame as a musician. He was so ready to be pleased, so eager to please others. Unlike most artists I have known, he never bored anybody with talking about his art, but if he found that music interested the persons with whom he happened to be talking he was ready to satisfy their curiosity to their hearts' content. He was then, as indeed always, not in robust health, and was easily fatigued. On one or two occasions I remonstrated with him about his readiness to go on playing at the piano, and his answer was invariably that as long as people liked to hear him it was always an enjoyment to him to play. I shared the same sitting-room with him for three months. With rare and brief intervals I saw him morning, noon, and evening, and yet I can recall but one single occasion when we talked together about music or musical subjects. I have often fancied since that one of the circumstances which led to my intimate friendship with Sullivan was that I never worried him by talking about music—a subject on which I was, and am, grossly ignorant, and concerning which he knew my utter ignorance.

I found on our arrival that he had a strong wish to learn something about Arab music, and arranged with my old friend, Tigrane Bey, who died a few months ago, to engage some of the most celebrated musicians in Cairo to give a private concert in Nubar Pasha's house, which his future son-in-law was then occupying. Of this entertainment I find the following record in the diary of 1882 :—

*January 14th, 1882.—I dined at the club. After dinner went to Tigrane*

Bey's house, with Osman Pasha (a cousin of the then Khedive), Dicey, and Sartoris, to hear the Arab music. Six musicians were in waiting for us, and Osman said they were the best in Cairo, that there were none so good anywhere. One only, the chief singer, was in Arab dress. They all sat cross-legged on a divan. Four played and two sang, occasionally they all joined in the chorus. The instruments were the *out*, a kind of large mandoline with six bichord strings, tuned and played with a quill; the *kanoon*, a kind of trichord zither, with a scale of three octaves, quills on both hands; and the *ney*, or *ni*, a perpendicular flute, from which I could not elicit *one single sound*. I can't understand how it is blown, although I watched and tried frequently. There was also a tambourine, which was only tapped very gently to help the rhythm. The music is impossible to describe and impossible to note down. The different kinds of pieces they played and sang were called *Pescheveff*, *Sabbach*, and *Taezin*. The chief, who played the *out* (pronounced *oot*), was a very fine player with really remarkable execution; the kanounist was scarcely inferior. We had three hours and a half. Refreshments and smoking went on all the time. I came away dead beat, having listened with all my ears and all my intelligence.

I confess that most of this criticism is Hebrew to me. All my personal recollection about the affair is that the performance was mortal long, and that I slumbered—I hope peacefully—most of the time. I recall also that while walking home Sullivan told me he had had an idea of introducing some Oriental tunes into his forthcoming piece (I think it was *The Mikado*), but that after this night's experience he had abandoned the idea on the ground, if I rightly understood, that Arab music was based on a system of musical harmonies and discords utterly different from, and incompatible with, that of Europe.

On almost every page of the diary I come across the entry, "Wrote to

mother." Whatever else he may have been, he was the best and most affectionate of sons. He not only provided liberally for his mother's wants and comforts—many sons would do the like—but (what very few sons I have known would do) he would give up his own invitations and amusements to render her life happier. Sunday after Sunday, in the height of the London season, he would drive down to Fulham to play cribbage with his old mother. She had, I fancy, known much trouble and sorrow; but she was so bright and cheery, so fond of her boy, so kindly to his friends, that we all felt it a personal loss when she passed away. It was the custom of many of Arthur Sullivan's friends to come and breakfast with him on the morning of the Derby, and at these breakfasts his mother always presided. When we were about to start, she would beg her son and his friends to leave their watches with her, as she was sure they would be robbed in the crowd. The standing joke on these occasions was to pretend that she intended to pawn them in order to provide the funds to back her fancy in the great race, and we all were expected to beg for the name of the horse by which she hoped to enrich herself at our cost. The joke was not much in itself, but the gusto with which Mrs. Sullivan requested the loan of our watches, and the way in which "her boy," as she called him, played up to her by denouncing the dire consequences of gambling on borrowed capital, never failed to make a hit in that

small and select party, of which so few now remain alive.

The same thoughtful kindness extended to his servants. To serve him was with them, in very truth, a labor of love. During the last few years of his life, when he was in constant pain and suffering, they did everything in their power to cheer and relieve him. The bitter grief entertained by them for his death was due to no selfish motive, as he had provided by his will so as to enable them to live in comfort without the necessity of continuing in service. It was Sullivan's delight on Christmas and New Year's Day, and his own birthday, to have his relatives and friends as his guests in his chambers. The evening always ended with a distribution of presents. Not one was overlooked, and none could fail to realize that their host had taken great trouble to consider what present would be most acceptable. As one of the codicils of his will concerning myself has been published in the papers, I have no hesitation about reproducing it here as evidence of his constant thoughtfulness. It was, I fancy, added in the days of his last illness, and runs as follows:—"As dear old Ned was always fond of an easy-chair, I wish him to select from my belongings the armchair which suits him best." I availed myself of the bequest, and chose a chair in which he himself, during his temporary relief from racking pains, was in the habit of sitting. As I write these lines, I see it before me now—empty.

*Edward Dicey.*

*The Fortnightly Review.*

### J A N.

I made Jan's acquaintance in Amsterdam. He lived in a very small street with a very long name, somewhere between the Kalverstraat and

the Singel. He was not a handsome man. He was short, and his arms were very long; his lank hair was the color of unripe corn, in his eyes was

the passionless blue of skimmed milk, and his complexion was pale brown; his nose, in profile, was almost an equilateral triangle. It was impossible to guess his age; he might have been at any year between seventeen and seventy.

I forget how we first met. Jan's figure in his blue blouse, much-patched trousers, high black cap and wooden shoes, is as closely woven into the background of my Dutch experiences as are the windmills and canals in the scenery.

Jan's profession, or professions, perplexed me. He was never a week out of work, but he was rarely at the same work for a week. Sometimes he was a gardener and worked in the Vondel Park; at other times I saw him on the dam much occupied with the tram-lamps; now he would get a job on a barge, either unloading or punting; and then he would play ferryman on the Amstel; occasionally, during the vegetable season, he would repair to the home of his grandmother at Zaandam, and hawk new potatoes with a barrow drawn by his grandmother's dogs.

I had drifted to Amsterdam on a tour round some of the European picture-galleries. I meant to stay three days and see the Night Watch and the Ryks Museum. I stayed three months, and saw, under Jan's guidance, a good deal of the national life,—the peasant life, that is to say, for in these days wealth eclipses race-traditions and has a nationality of its own, levelling its subjects to a cosmopolitan routine of hotels, where German waiters, French cooking, and English upholstery generate an atmosphere that defies latitude and longitude, and relegates the color and flavor of locality to the working classes. Jan showed me the picturesque side of Dutch life; if it were the under-side, it was not his fault

that civilization sweeps what is picturesque from the surface. He also imparted to me a fairly useful smattering of the somewhat intricate mother-tongue, and incidentally all the bad language thereof.

I was introduced to the household of Jan's grandmother, who lived in a little green wooden house in sight of a forest of windmills, and whose wrinkled face in its frame of a crisp white cap suggested a Rembrandt canvas. I was introduced to Jan's great chum, a villainously dirty diamond cutter in the Ghetto, and to the drunken skipper of a clumsy peat barge from the north, —but they do not belong to this story.

I always meant to return to Holland; but I had to work hard, and money was scarce. The months melted into years and I remained in London.

About five years after my idle holiday in the byways of Amsterdam, my work took me daily to the Reading Room of the British Museum, and my income necessitated my making my home in a dingy room over a small baker's shop in the Tottenham Court Road. It was a very small shop. Two shelves round it held the loaves of bread, bags of flour, and tins of biscuits that were the whole stock-in-trade. In the window were displayed trays of sticky buns and unappetizing slabs of cake. A red label on the door advertised the fact that afternoon tea was served at the round, marble-topped, rickety table at the back of the shop in front of the counter.

When I returned from my work at six every afternoon, I had tea at the rickety marble-topped table, and watched Mrs. Garford, the mistress of the establishment, presiding over the counter; Mr. Garford lived downstairs with the ovens. Her treatment of customers was peculiar, though dignified. She spent her time knitting severe gray under-garments, and when the

jerky door-bell announced the entrance of a patron, she raised her head with an expression of displeasure on her countenance marked enough to reduce the intruder to a state of abject apology. But at the hour when my observations were taken the customers were mostly tiny children, wizened wisps of humanity, with huge bags, making timid enquiries concerning the disposal of stale bread and broken biscuits. When times were good, or when editors paid up, I could put buns into the cold, dirty little fingers, though Mrs. Garford frowned, and complained that such proceedings encouraged a business she could very well dispense with.

One evening, as I sat over my heavy cup of tea, a little man shuffled up to the counter and demanded a half-pennyworth of stale bread. Despite the English clothes he wore I recognized his familiar gait and bearing.

"By Jove! Jan, by all that's wonderful! Have you forgotten me, Jan?" I exclaimed.

"Hé! Mynheer Peter!" returned Jan without the slightest astonishment; but he shook hands and I think his queer face brightened a little: we had been good friends.

A pause ensued. Jan was not communicative and sought neither confidences nor interest.

"How is your grandmother, Jan?" was what occurred to me as the politest question to begin with.

"Dead," said Jan.

"Dead?" My accents were meant to convey regret and sympathy.

"Buried," added Jan firmly.

There was nothing for it but more questions.

"What made you come to London?" Jan grunted.

"What do you think of it now you're here?"

"Dirty," said Jan cheerfully, putting down his halfpenny and beginning to

envelope his bread in the folds of a red handkerchief. "Damned dirty."

Further examination elicited the information that he had found employment in the work-room of a neighboring furniture shop, and that he was living in an unsavory slum near Windmill Street. As he passed out of the door he turned round and asked: "How goes it with you, Mynheer Peter?"

"Pretty well, thanks."

Jan grunted again, and disappeared in the human stream on the pavement, leaving me to enjoy a lecture from Mrs. Garford on the probably deplorable consequences of my association with what she, with the disarming snobbishness of a motherly woman, denounced as low acquaintances.

I saw Jan two or three times a week after that night. Our meetings were cordial, if brief; and our mutual esteem was not diminished by our mutual reserve. He always came into the shop at the same hour, and always made the same purchase, a halfpennyworth of bread; but one day I was surprised to hear him asking the price of every cake on view. Mrs. Garford showing herself supremely bored at this catechism, as he betrayed not the slightest intention of buying more than his one loaf, he turned to me and enquired if I were going out. From past experience of Jan's methods I interpreted the hint as an invitation and took up my hat. "I will walk a little way with you, Jan," I said. His silent acquiescence told me that I had taken my cue rightly, and we went out together.

After a little hesitation Jan crossed the road and made for the comparative seclusion of Bedford Square. We walked round it while Jan seemed to be making up his mind about something. Presently he began, in Dutch, as though he found it easier: "You will not take it amiss, Mynheer Peter, that I confide in you?"

"Rather not! What's up?" said I cheerily.

When we reached the third side of the square he blurted out: "I am married."

I was surprised to an uncomplimentary degree; but my amazement seemed to please him. He nodded with great satisfaction, and repeated, "Ja, Ja, I am a married man."

"Many congratulations, Jan! How long ago was the wedding?"

After some deliberation Jan replied that he had been married for three years, adding with immense pride that his wife's name was Wilhelmina.

"Then she is Dutch?"

"No, Mynheer, she is English. She has your English brown hair. She is tall,—but tall! And her eyes are large—enormous!"

Jan's gesticulations seemed to imply that his wife was as tall as the lamp-post we had just passed, and that her eyes were the size of the square round which we were still wandering.

"You must introduce me to her, Jan," I suggested.

Murmuring something about being much honored, he seemed to shuffle back to his usual reticence, and we parted.

The next time we met I politely enquired after Wilhelmina's health. I was informed that she was very well, and delicately led to understand that Jan expected another addition to his little family.

"Another one, Jan? Have you a child, then?"

"Two, Mynheer; a boy and a little maid, splendid children. They take after their mother; they are handsome, —damned handsome." I believe Jan was under the impression that the expletive with which he usually qualified his adjectives was the correct superlative; it was the only one I ever heard him use.

The new arrival was a girl. Jan ex-

plained that he preferred girls, and seemed to be pleased that his tastes had been consulted; though he added immediately that he was glad his eldest was a son. I asked Jan to let me see his offspring, and occasionally I sent them a few sweets or oranges; but each time that I was to be taken to Jan's home something intervened. Once I was hurriedly sent off to review a new play produced down at Brighton; once the children developed measles. Another time I was told that Wilhelmina was ill. Jan's queer little face was screwed into an anxious frown; he looked quite ill himself, and I did not see him for a fortnight. Then I met him in Charing Cross Road, looking pinched and wan, but he cheered up when I spoke to him. From the depths of a spacious pocket he produced a screw of paper, and unfurled about a yard of cheap yellow ribbon.

"I have been buying ribbon for Wilhelmina," he said. "Wilhelmina is better and is having a new bonnet. It is to be a fine bonnet."

While he carefully folded up his treasure again I was wondering whether Wilhelmina was not a little extravagant. She had been ill: illness meant expense, and Jan looked decidedly shabby and in low water. It seemed an odd moment to buy fine new bonnets. But he seemed pleased, and it was certainly not my business, so I enquired after the babies and went on my way.

That winter was a very severe one. Each time I met Jan he looked thinner and more shrivelled. I began to suspect that he was hard up, and once I offered to lend him a little money. The sum I offered was not a large one because I happened to be exceedingly hard up myself; but Jan haughtily refused it. He had plenty of money, he said; and he added that he had a great many friends who could afford to lend him money better than I could.

Jan's manners were never particularly gracious.

Two days afterwards he crossed the street to show me a toy he had purchased for his baby. It was a gaudy little ball on a piece of elastic. He had probably given a penny for it, and he showed it to me with child-like glee. My mind was a little easier about him; he looked cold, and ill, and half-starved, but I reasoned that if he could afford to buy toys for his children he could not be so poor as he appeared to be.

For some weeks after that I did not see him. Then one evening the post brought me an almost illegible scrawl on a post-card. "To Mynheer Peter—I am ill, Mynheer, very ill. Jan."

It was a raw foggy evening as I groped my way to the address at the top of the card; the street-lights shone as faintly luminous round clouds, and the staircase up which I stumbled at the end of my journey was as dark as the street outside was dirty. Eventually I found my way into a small room at the top of the house. A woman, the parish nurse, was attending to the spark of fire in the tiny grate, and Jan lay motionless on a narrow bed.

"If you want to see him, you're only just in time," said the woman. "He's sinking fast. He has been talk-

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ing, but I can't understand a word he says."

"Poor old Jan!" I exclaimed. I went across to the bed, and he opened his eyes.

"Hé, mynheer," he said very feebly. He panted for breath, and then he murmured, "About Wilhelmina."

"All right, old fellow," I said soothingly. "I'll look after Wilhelmina and the kiddies."

But he looked unsatisfied.

"Where's his wife?" I asked. "Couldn't she be here, and the children? He wants them."

"He is delirious," answered the nurse. "He hasn't got any wife or children."

Before I could contradict the woman, Jan's hand touched my sleeve.

"I was so lonely, mynheer Peter," he said apologetically, "so damned lonely."

Those were his last words.

I found the piece of yellow ribbon and the little toy carefully wrapped up and stowed away in an old wooden box. I put them into Jan's hands, and his little romance, his make-believe happiness, was buried with him.

I suppose he found comfort in impressing me with tales of his invented wife and children. Perhaps he invented his game of happiness to impress himself, and found that a spectator made it more real.

## THE WAR IN THE FAR EAST.—VI.

### THE BLOCKADE-RUNNER.

*Tient-sin, November.*

The autumn sun was just sinking in a bank of haze through which it peered, a murky globule of tarnished rose, when the skipper of the *George Washington* changed his course to make the Chefoo headland. The fog which

hung heavily to the north-west had beaten the breeze. There was not a ripple on the oily surface of the Yellow Sea; and the countless fingers radiating from the Chefoo light heralded a real thick Pechili night. The skipper of the *George Washington*, a rough ill-hewn

Norwegian, came up from the chart-house, and, thrusting his great hairy hands deep into his coarse duck pockets, stepped the bridge pace for pace with his "hard case" mate, and talked gruffly of the sweets of the Karl Frederick's bar in Tsin-tau, their last port of call. The Malay quartermaster blinked stolidly at the wheel behind them. There is no worry about pilots in Chefoo's open roadstead; and once the skipper had made the headland, he just tucked the *George Washington* in behind a Butterfield & Swire's packet, and followed her stern light. His eye caught the great cloud of black smoke which, also beaten by the mist, trailed heavily behind the coaster. Then he glanced quickly up at his own smoke-stack. A similar dead-weight of burnt Japanese coal hung in motionless cloud behind him. The Norwegian stopped and said curtly to the mate, "Tell the engineer I want to see him."

In five minutes a little wizened figure stood at the skipper's elbow. A grimy finger touched the greasy pilot-cap which was pulled well down over a pair of ferret eyes.

"You wanted me, sir?"

"Yes, Higgin. Have you got that 'Welsh' trimmed?"

The little ferrety eyes gave a knowing signal as the dilapidated machinist made answer, "Rather: the Japanese on top will just take us in." The gnarled mate, returned from his errand, had walked over to the rail, and as he stared at the lights now beginning to twinkle on Chefoo Bluff, was making a mental calculation as to how much two thousand Mexican dollars a-month would work out per diem. Then it struck him that the sun had sunk low enough for their purpose, and he sent a deck hand to take in the sun-bleached ensign from astern. They were now up amongst the war-ships. The skipper took them astern of the *Hai-shen*, then inside the Austrians.

As they passed the *Vicksburg* and the American tender, the Chinese bos'un and winchmen clambered on to the forecastle, where the mate joined them. They were right under the Bluff now, with its countless lights dancing across the harbor-swell. The whirr of a winch told them that the Butterfield & Swire boat had let go her anchor. The skipper brought the *George Washington* in between her and a China Merchant, and dropped his hook.

In ten minutes the Chinese Maritime Customs' boat was alongside, and the little white-haired "runner" satisfied that the *George Washington* was carrying a cargo of Moji coal to Tsin-wantau, and had put into Chefoo to take water and the 100 tons of Chinese cargo consigned to the treaty port of Newchwang. Having settled his business with the port authorities, the skipper changed his duck suiting for a presentable suit of serge. Handing the ship over to the mate, he selected a *sanpan* from the cluster of hopeful boatmen swarming round the ladder, and went shorewards with his mind full of thoughts of a Beach Hotel dinner.

The *sanpan* brought up at the sea-wall, and the skipper, throwing a twenty-cent piece into the bottom of the boat, climbed up the steps. A throng of lazy Chinamen was crowding the *bund*. They made way for the burly European as he shaped his course for the town. Just as he reached the cable office an exceptionally dirty coolie ran up to him and saluted with a half-naval, half-civilian tug at his ancient cloth-cap.

"Alright, master, Mr. Balleyhew Beach Hotel have got?"

The skipper shook his head, and answered, "All right, Wong"; while the Chinaman slunk away much as a ricksha-coolie would on his solicitations being rebuffed. The skipper walked directly to the hotel and turned into the

bar entrance. A couple of coasting-masters were standing at the counter, and they both greeted the Norwegian, "Hullo, Jorgessen; we heard that they had sent you to Siberia to do a little hard labor."

"How did you manage to get clear of Vladivostock? Have a Scotch!" The skipper joined his colleagues, and helped himself from the bottle they pushed towards him before he made answer.

"I've been away some time. They talked much about the old hooker; but they let her go. There's pretty rough times in the coast-trade now."

"What have you got now?"

"George Washington, an old tank chartered to carry coal for the Pechill Mining Company."

"I know her," said one of the masters, flicking the ash from his cigar; "converted Holt boat. Rather fast boat for the coal-trade, not, Jorgessen?"

The skipper shrugged his shoulders, stood the men a further potion, and then excused himself and withdrew into the hotel. He sauntered into the entrance-hall, ordered the boy to keep him a place at dinner, and then scanned the visitors' list. Finding the number of the room he required, he spent two dollars in playing with an automatic gambling-machine before disappearing up the residential passage. Having ascertained the right room, he knocked sharply at the door and entered. A fair, almost boyish, young Englishman rose to meet him.

"Well, Jorgessen, how are your nerves? you have a fine night."

The dour Norwegian smiled sardonically as he answered, "The promise of such a night has prompted me to come earlier than I intended: but I would have preferred a gale of wind!"

"Why did you come in here at all?" queried the youth.

"Because we heard that they were

watching off Shantung for direct sailings to ports in the Gulf of Pechili. This spell of fair weather necessitates caution. As it was, we were signalled by the *Chiyoda* yesterday: if we had been bound for any port but Chefoo, she would probably have overhauled us, and we didn't want that. Also, I would like to see the color of the money. Half down, I think!"

The Englishman moved across the room to the writing-table, unlocked a despatch-box, and, lifting the lid, took out a bundle of crisp notes. The wad was a couple of inches thick.

"How much was it?" the youth said as he wetted his thumb.

"Fifteen thousand roubles!"

"Fifteen thousand roubles it is!" and he counted out thirty of the notes. "Wouldn't you like me to keep them for you? I wouldn't advise you to take them with you."

"I wish to take them," the skipper answered almost sullenly. "I know what to do with them," and he thrust the packet into his hip-pocket.

"When will you sail?" and the Englishman returned the balance to his despatch-box, turning the key.

"As soon as the Chinese rubbish is on board: I suppose you sent the lighters off?"

"Yes; they are alongside now."

"And my papers?"

"Will be on board by ten o'clock; it's lucky we haven't to deal with the British consul!"

"Well, good-bye then," and the Norwegian crushed the youth's slim hand in his massive paw.

"Good-bye, and may fortune be with you! When shall we expect you back in Chefoo?"

"That depends on the weather and the—Japanese!"

The skipper slammed the door behind him and shambled into the dining-room. He sat down to his dinner with 15,000 roubles in his pocket as uncon-

cernedly as if he had just received his monthly pay of fifteen pounds.

The two coasting masters, after their shore revel, were returning to their respective ships about midnight. As the *sanpan* took them under the stern of the Butterfield & Swire boat, which was still taking cargo, one of them remarked—

"Hello, old Jorgessen's tank has pulled out. Old surly Jorg didn't look as if he was in such a 'continental' hurry. Wonder what the glass says: the old boy knows this condemned harbor,—'spose he's gone to another anchorage."

"He'll consider himself d—d lucky if he casts his hook where he hopes to by sun up to-morrow, or my name's not Thompson. He'll be steaming with doused lights the night, or I'm a Dutchman!"

"What! a dash for Port Arthur! It's a fine thick night for it."

"Well, the Pechill Company don't usually ferry coals in sixteen-knot hookers."

The sound of the Butterfield & Swire winches drowned further conversation. . . .

The master of the coaster had been wrong in his supposition about the lights. When he gave it as his opinion that the *George Washington* was steaming for Port Arthur with "doused lights," she was steering for the Howki light with all the outward appearance of an honest trader. But a look round her decks would have shown that something unusual was under way. After taking in her cargo at Chefoo the hoist-spars had been lowered and housed. Now the winches had been again uncovered and the spars unshipped, and were being swung out over the side, as if in preparation to take in cargo again. The vessel, too, was slipping through the water at such

a pace as told that the engines were under their fullest pressure. The night was as dark as pitch, and the fog so thick that it was with difficulty you saw the lines of the forecastle from the bridge. The skipper stood alone on the bridge with the blinking Malay at the wheel, while the mate busied himself with the preparations of the lifting-gear. This finished, he mustered his Chinese crew, and, opening a locker just abaft the foremast, handed to each an iron belaying-pin. This finished, he rejoined his chief on the bridge, and for an hour the two paced up and down without exchanging a word. Suddenly a voice from the forecastle reported the Howki light. The skipper and mate went down into the chart-room, and in five minutes the course was set. The skipper returned to the bridge and put the helm over until the ship's head was due north, while the mate whistled the boatswain; and in five minutes mast-head, stern, and side-lights had been brought in and the lanterns placed, still lighted, in the lamp-room. The ship in five minutes had become a thing of darkness, ploughing into the midst of darkness. . . .

The *George Washington* was doing her best. The glow at the top of the smoke-stack was all that was visible ten yards from her, except the white phosphorescent race which she churned up with her propeller. The darkness seemed to form up in front of her as some great opaque wall. The mist had gathered rather than dispersed. The mate came back from examining the patent log. It registered 17 knots, point 2. The engines registered 16; there was therefore a current with her, and the skipper, calculating that she was setting to the east, still held on due north.

"That should bring her to her destination in two hours, or pile her on the rocks." The skipper set his teeth and

stamped his sea-boots on the deck, for the fog was wet and cold. The crew were huddled into one of the deck-houses. The only lights were the carefully screened binnacle and the suspicion of glare from the smoke-stack. In another forty minutes he would have nothing to fear but loose mines and the rocks. The blockade was nearly run, and they had not seen the vestige of a Jap.

What was that? Something seemed to break into the monotonous grind of the throbbing engines. The two officers moved to the port side and leaned far over the rail with eager ears. Nothing; the swish of their own displacement drowned everything. What relief! No; there it is again. It is unmistakable this time; it is the peculiar pant of a torpedo craft. The look-outs have got it now, for they too are craning over the rail. Yes; there is a dark body moving parallel with them. The skipper seizes the night-glasses. He need not have worried, for the closed eye of the searchlight is suddenly opened; and though it falters in its struggle with the fog, yet the blurred beam can cleave the gloom sufficiently for the information of both crews.

"Small torpedo-boat" is the Norwegian skipper's verdict. "Get the lights shipped again, Mr. Poole, and look round and see if more swine of her kind are on hand. If there are, we must run for it and trust to providence: if she is alone, well—" and he glanced up at the outline of the hoisting-gear.

In the meantime the torpedo-boat was groping with its searchlight to ascertain the nature of the craft she had discovered. In a sea so calm it took her no time to decrease the distance until the searchlight could overpower the fog.

But by this time the *George Washington* had its port side light again showing. The boat was now close enough

to speak. The challenge came in English through a megaphone.

"Ship ahoy—What ship is that?"

The skipper put his hands together and shouted through them "*George Washington*, Norwegian; Shanghai to Tsin-wan-tau."

The Japanese evidently did not hear very well; at least they did not seem to understand, for the megaphone rasped out the peremptory order, "Stop, or we'll sink you!"

The mate was now back on the bridge. The skipper with his hand on the telegraph turned to him inquiringly. Instinctively the mate understood. "It's all right, old man; they are solitary, and everything's ready!" Over went the telegraph's handle. The bell rang back from the engine-room, and the throbbing in the ship's internals ceased.

"Stop her!" shrieked the megaphone.

"She's stopped, you blankety fools!" answered the skipper.

It takes a ship in good trim doing sixteen knots some time to run to a standstill, so the torpedo-boat improved the opportunity, circling round her quarry and scrutinizing her under the beam of its searchlight. But the fog was so opaque that at the distance she thought it safe to keep she could have made out but little detail.

The English-speaking expert on the megaphone kept up a running supply of queries. At last he shouted, "Why had you not all your lights?"

"You made that out, did you?" mused the captain, as he shouted back, "Electric lighted ship—dynamo suddenly gave out—had to light oil lights."

"Don't understand—stand by for a rope—am coming alongside."

"Port or starboard?" asked the skipper.

"Port!"

"Thank our lucky stars for this calm," soliloquized the skipper; then, aloud, "Everything ready, Mr. Poole?"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

The torpedo-boat turned round, shut off the searchlight, and, reducing her speed, swung down on the *George Washington*. A few pants from the oscillating engines, the chime of the bell, a slight bump, and the torpedo-boat was alongside. The rope was thrown up and made fast. The first man of the boarding party was swinging himself up by the gangway, when a deep voice from the collier's bridge shouted "Let go!"

"Two blows with a hammer—a winch whirring like an express train, and then with a grinding crash a cast-iron patent anchor with a forty-foot play tore its way through the deck, fore compartment, and bottom of the torpedo-boat. The resistance might have been tissue paper, for the released steel hawse followed after the anchor. The

mate parted the rope holding the torpedo-boat with a single blow of his axe. The skipper telegraphed the engine-room, "Full steam ahead." The Chinese boatswain brained the boarding-officer with his belaying-pin. With a convulsive shudder, as if she were a human being shaking off a reptile, the *George Washington* drew clear of the torpedo-boat. And just in time, for the rush of water spurting up within the little boat had reached her boilers, and she burst asunder with a report like a blasting charge. Then the black curtain of fog and night closed over all.

"Narrow squeak, Mr. Poole," grunted the skipper as the mate joined him on the bridge.

"Dirty business; but it worked famously, sir. What's that ahead?"

"Port Arthur searchlights: if we don't hit a mine, we're through!"

#### THE AFFAIR OF THE BRIDGE-GUARD.

A smart little Japanese officer, resplendent in the amalgamation of yellow, green, and scarlet which furnishes the uniform of the Guards cavalry, rode up to the portico of the unpretentious building, which is the headquarters of the great General Staff in Tokio. A foreign onlooker would have remarked upon the seat of this little light cavalryman. He sat his horse far better than the majority of cavalry officers to be seen in the capital; also, there was a cut about his tunic and a smartness in his general appearance which were in contrast to what is generally seen in the capital of the Mikado's Empire. There was a reason for this. Lieutenant Zamoto had just returned from the best finishing school in the world for a cavalry officer. He had been associated for the last two years with a Bengal cavalry regiment, and consequently had taken his final polish from the best type of cavalry officer living.

Proud of his profession and imitative to a degree, if he found aught in the possession of others that was worthy of imitation, Zamoto had fashioned himself on all that was best in the atmosphere of three great Continental nations, and he had returned to his home a model of what every cavalry officer of the Guard should be, no matter what his race, breeding, or origin.

The little infantry sentry in the portico came hurriedly to "the present," with all the clatter and precision required in a German text-book. As Zamoto dismounted, an orderly dropped down the steps and took his horse from him. Just stopping to brush the dust from his patent-leather boots, Zamoto entered the portal of the Staff building, the faculty of which, though at the moment in the midst of peace, was working diligently at the machinery which would have made immediate warfare possible. As Zamoto clattered in, the messengers and

orderlies stood up in their places. He acknowledged the salutation, as any well-bred Japanese would have done, whether his regiment was Cavalry or the Guard or not, and mounting the stairway went up to the office of the staff-officer who had summoned him.

He opened the door without ceremony, and was welcomed by his brother officer with as much formal courtesy as if he had been a total stranger. A glance round the room declared at once the immeasurable difference between the East and West. The officer whom he was visiting, if his titles could be accurately translated into English, would possibly have been a D.A.Q.M.G. for intelligence. His office was likewise his lodging. He had a little cubicle of a room. In one corner was a camp-bed, which bore the evidence of having been slept in on the preceding night. A miniature toilet-stand stood beside it. For the rest, the furniture consisted of two chairs, a table, and an iron-bound chest, the latter apparently for the safe keeping of documents. The office-table, however, was a pattern of neatness. All along its length lay docketed piles of telegrams, and it was evident from the writing materials in front of this D.A.Q.M.G. that his duties lay in the digesting of the contents of each telegram that reached his department. The weather was hot, and consequently the staff-officer had discarded most of his uniform. His red-banded shako was thrown on the bed, his sword hung on a nail from the wall, while his tunic had slipped on to the floor behind him. Zamoto sat down on the one vacant chair, and after the first pleasure which etiquette required, remarked—

"Well, I received your telegram, and here I am."

The staff-officer looked at him sleepily between his little slits of eyelids; it would have seemed that he took no in-

terest in the question or the visitor, but that sleepy look was penetrating and searching. He was trying to detect in Zamoto's features any sign that might exist of recent debauchery or ill-living likely to prove prejudicial to future soldierly conduct. Doubtless Zamoto knew that he was undergoing this scrutiny. For a moment the two men looked at each other impassively, and then the meaningless smile flickered over the staff officer's features as he passed to the cavalryman a paper packet of cigarettes.

"Well," said the staff-officer, as he lighted his cigarette from a little ball of live charcoal in the ash-tray at his elbow, "it is not I who wanted to see you. You have been sent for by a higher authority—he will see you now; come along with me."

Thereupon the staff-officer picked up his coat, shook it, and put it on, re-adjusted his sword-belt, and led Zamoto through a side-door into the neighboring room.

An elderly officer, with his shako awry, and his tunic all unbuttoned, was sitting cross-legged on a chair. He was leaning over a map and sucking laboriously at a fat cigar. His butcher boots had evidently inconvenienced him, for they had been cast off and were lying under the table; his socks were striped in black and white, and that of the left foot had a big hole in the heel. This was the picture that met Zamoto as he stood stiffly to attention, having brought his heels together with smartness and precision.

"Your Excellency, here is Lieutenant Zamoto."

With this brief introduction the staff-officer withdrew and closed the door behind him. The general inclined his head in acknowledgment of the entrance of his subordinates, and turning round in his chair, took a slip of paper out of a basket on the floor by his

side. He gave one brief glance at the subaltern before him, and commenced to read from the paper.

"You will proceed immediately to Yinkow; there you will report yourself to the Japanese consul, who will put you into communication with a certain person in Newchwang; with the instructions of that person you will place yourself in communication with a certain section of the Hun-hutzas. It will be your duty to use your knowledge of that part of China to organize certain of these Hun-hutzas after the Japanese system. Of that system you are already aware. You will receive more definite instructions from time to time after you have arrived at Yinkow. You will proceed in a civilian capacity in any guise that you may see fit."

Having finished reading the paper, the little old man tossed it back in the basket, adding—

"Do you understand clearly?"

The subaltern nodded his assent. "Then," continued the general, "understanding your duty, go and perform it well, looking for strength and guidance to the far-reaching power and goodness of our Emperor."

Knowing he was dismissed, Zamoto bowed again, and rejoined the staff-officer in the next room.

Five Chinese were lying huddled close together on the raised platform which serves all Manchu households for a bed. In spite of its paper windows and the state of the season outside, the interior of the room was not cold, at least not at the spot where the five men were lying, since it is the custom of these people in winter to maintain a permanent fire in an outhouse, the flue of which passes under the common bed. Although the only light in the room was from the faint glow of a smoking oil-lamp perched on the end of a rod, yet it was sufficient to

show that the house belonged to one of the poorest and dirtiest of Manchu husbandmen. Everything was black and murky with lamp-smoke. Lumps of flesh, which, if it had not been for the intense cold, would long ago have been putrefying, were hanging from the centre joists. Yet it is in hovels like this that one is glad to penetrate when one is caught in a Manchurian wind-storm.

The five men appeared to be asleep, for there was no movement noticeable amongst the skins which covered them other than the even rise and fall of human respiration. Presently there was a sound outside. A heavy door moved, and half a dozen sleeping dogs were disturbed into temporary excitement. There were the sounds of a man stamping his feet, and it seemed from the swish of fuel that he was stoking the fire in the outhouse. Doubtless some belated wayfarer, who, almost frozen by the bitter cold outside, was now warming himself before the grateful embers. Then the door of the sleeping apartment opened, and the figure of a sixth Chinaman appeared. He, like his fellows, was clad in skins, and icicles stood out from the fur adjacent to his face. The dim light from the spluttering oil-lamp made the frost upon his garments glisten and sparkle, as if he were covered with stage spangles. The figure moved over to the five sleeping men, and shook them, one by one, by the foot. Their sleep was evidently that of men who are used to catch such scanty repose as opportunity will allow, for in a moment all five were awake. A few words from the recent comer and they were tightening their belts and taking down arms from the rafters above them. They were a band of Hun-hutzas, members of the fraternity of licensed highwaymen who haunt the valley of the Liau-ho. It was evident that they had some desperate work in hand, for the late-

comer imparted his information to each in turn, and the men conversed in whispers. The late-comer then went to a brass-bound chest which stood against the household bed. He opened the lid; the chest was full to the brim with barley. Taking off his fur gauntlet, the Hun-hutza plunged his arm into the barley and drew out a metal cylinder. He repeated this operation until he had possessed himself of four similar cylinders; these he secreted in the big inside pouch of his fur robe.

Thus equipped, the six men, leaving the lamp burning, stole out of the room—out through the pent-house, past the growling dogs, into the court beyond, across the courtyard to another building. The stamping of hoofs on the frozen floor indicated that it was a stable. Six ponies were led out one by one, and then the great iron-bound and quaintly carved door of the courtyard was gingerly opened, and the six men led their horses through into the howling blizzard outside. They girthed up, mounted their unwilling steeds, and in single file rode northwards. For an hour, perhaps, they were together, constantly beating their arms against their sides to keep the circulation in their extremities. At the end of an hour they arrived at a little group of trees. Here they halted and dismounted, two of the men remaining with the ponies, while the other four started out across the snow. The blizzards in Manchuria do not drift much snow that lies: it is the wind and the frost that kill on this vast steppe. But by now the fury of the storm had somewhat abated; and as there was no moon, and the recent snow had become slippery, their progress was slow. It was certain that their mission was one of extreme danger, and necessitated the utmost caution, for the men had cast their firearms loose, and had them ready to hand. It seemed, though it was diffi-

cult to see, that they were armed with modern rifles. Suddenly they halted again, and threw themselves flat on the snow. By the aid of the stars and the white mantle that covered the whole surface of the earth, by straining the eyes it was just possible to make out the outline of some obstacle ahead. It was evidently the objective of this desperate quartette. A well-known sound strikes the ear. There is the pant and fuss of a locomotive breasting an incline. It approaches nearer and nearer, and the four desperadoes lying flat on their stomachs can see a shower of sparks which the wood fuel emits from the funnel. The rise has been mastered, and fifty yards in front of the prostrate men the great train passes, shaking into a better pace as the last of its long load of wagons arrives above the crest. All is clear now. The four night-birds are train-wreckers working in the interests of the Japanese against the Russian communications. The train passes, and the red light on the aftermost truck is disappearing in the far distance. Then the four men again begin to worm themselves forward on their stomachs. From time to time they hear the guttural shouts of the Siberian railway guards from an adjacent picket. The night is dark, and they trust to arrive at the line unseen. After a tedious and wearying half-hour they reach the edge of the cutting by the permanent way. The man with the cylinders has already got his hand inside his pouch, and is preparing to draw out the blasting charges. Suddenly there is a shout from behind. Anxiously each of the four turns his head in the direction of the sound. But they are too late, the recent snow has dulled the sound of the hoofs, and before they can spring up and defend themselves they are at the mercy of a patrol of half a dozen Cossack lancers. To fight is impossi-

ble: three of the Hun-hutzas throw themselves on their knees and pray for mercy. The fourth, he with the cylinders, makes an effort to cast his rifle loose and defend himself; but the Cossack *sous-officier* sees the movement, and, driving the butt of his lance hard into the wretch's stomach, hurls him breathless to the ground.

It is a beautiful morning as these severe winter mornings go, and the two Russian officers in charge of the bridge-guard turn out of their snug little bivouac under the embankment to hear the report that the night patrols have captured four train-wreckers red-handed.

"Bring them up," says the tall, fair, fur-covered senior, who is an officer from the European army, and has been posted to this section of the railway on account of the energy he has displayed in preventing damage to the line by the marauding Hun-hutzas. The four wretched culprits are brought before him. Miserables, their captors had extended to them nothing of the hospitality of mean warmth which they themselves were able to find in the bivouac of the bridge-guard. Miserable indeed, but stoical withal. The tall fair Russian, as he lit a cigarette, walked over to the prisoners and peered into the face of the shortest of the four. He took off the fur cap, and then laying hold of the queue beneath, gave it a wrench. It came away in his hand.

Blackwood's Magazine.

"Ha, ha! I thought so; it was too daring for those wretched Manchus to have undertaken by themselves." And the tall Russian laughed loudly. The laugh died on his lips as he looked at the Japanese face before him; he changed from his own tongue to French, looking the while like a man who has seen a ghost.

"My God!" he said, "it must be the same; to think that you should have come to this!"

The masquerading Japanese answered in halting French: "Yes, captain; when we were comrades together in Eure-et-Loire, we never dreamed that it would come to this." The Russian steadied himself, and, without saying a word, took out his cigarette-case and handed the Japanese a cigarette. Then he called his servant and ordered some spirits.

"Perhaps you would prefer tea?" he said to his sorry guest; "it is quite ready, only I must apologize that it is Russian tea."

The little Japanese admitted that he would prefer the tea. As he drank it the Russian captain grimly gave some orders to his escort, and, pulling out his watch, he reverted to French:—

"Lieutenant Zamoto, in five minutes you will be shot. It is the only concession I can make to you. Your three companions will be hanged immediately from the bridge-girders. God bless you!"

o.

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### MY NIGHTMARE TROUT.

I have fished in many waters, in many lands, and the cup of my fishing joys and sorrows has more than once been filled to overflowing, but never, I think, have hopes and fears so

fluctuated, nor sensations so varied been crowded into one experience, as on the occasion when I caught what my wife still calls my Nightmare Trout.

We were spending the summer on the East Coast of Scotland, in a primitive little village near which lived a friend on whose property was a fresh water loch, where the trout ran to enormous size, and where we occupied much time in trying—for the most part vainly—to capture them.

One evening in early July, after a day of roasting heat, the suggestion of "ripples of the rising trout" and the cool splash of some great fish so appealed to our minds that, after an early dinner, we set off languidly for the loch. Our way lay for about three miles over steep but not very lofty hills, hills which terminated on the right in great cliffs from three hundred to five hundred feet in height, against which, even in fine weather, roared eternally the sea, beating into the caves with a hollow boom, like the sound of big guns fired far off; while even above the never-ending moan of the sea came the clamor and clang of the gulls and guillemots, wailing, scoffing, jeering, like lost souls of the dead.

On each side of our path rabbits by scores, tame almost as sheep, hardly troubled themselves, as we passed, to seek the burrows which everywhere perforated the hillocks and clumps of whins; and here and there among the stunted furze we came on deep quarry-holes. Not a nice place to be out in on a dark night; but there was a moon, and a path fairly well defined, so if we stopped out till ten or eleven at night no harm should come to us, we thought.

It was eight o'clock before we began to fish, and a cold wind from the east had begun to blow by fits and starts, making us already wish that we had brought some clothing warmer than that we had on. But the trout were rising, here and there a big one breaking the surface of the water into huge ripples, and we thought no more of cold winds or warm clothes.

But our luck was out. We fished, and better fished, with no result but the capture of a few quarter- and half-pounders which, though they were plucky little chaps and fought well for fish so small, putting quite a heavy strain on our little ten-foot troutng rods, still gave no satisfaction to us, whose ears longed only for the music of the ringing reel and the rush of a monster trout. By ten o'clock the fish had almost ceased to rise, darkness was rapidly falling, a thick fog was creeping in from the sea, and the cold, as we sat drifting about in our boat (a great shallop with oars like a weaver's beam), began to smite us to the bone.

"I can't stand it much longer, Jim," said K.; "let's go home soon. It's no good. The fog has stopped them taking."

"All right," I answered; "I'll just have six casts mo— By George, I've got him!" I yelled, as a furious boil broke the surface, and a great gleaming side turned over close to my flies. I struck smartly, and away he sailed, in no hurry at first, but with a heavy drag as if one had got foul of a bullock. But presently, realizing that he had something in his mouth more than he bargained for, off he dashed into the mist with a magnificent rush that made my reel scream loud enough to rouse all the gulls on the coast.

"If you lose that one, Jim, I'll throw myself into the loch," said K., who was shaking with excitement and cold. "Never look me in the face again if you let him break you!"

"Steady does it," I said. "Take the oars, quick, and keep her head more up to him; try all you can to manage the old tub. My line's very nearly all out, and I can't stop him with this little rod. Quick!" and away in the fog we heard a mighty splash as the fish threw himself out of the water. Ere long I had got on easier terms

with him; he was for a moment close to the boat; K. stood ready with the net, and already in our minds we saw ourselves proudly weighing him in the boat-house, where hung a scale. But the end was not yet. With a furious plunge and a scream of the reel he was away again, and as the fog lifted for a second, letting in a weird white light from the sea, we saw him fling himself again out of the water.

"He's a giant," I said. "I never saw such a trout in my life; he is more like a salmon. But there's no possibility of a salmon here."

Then down came the fog again, and once more we were fighting an invisible foe. He fought, and fought, shaking my light little rod as a terrier shakes a rat, and then, with another wild plunge, he "sounded," and to our horror the tail hook caught in the weeds at the bottom of the loch in deep water. Our hearts sank, and the end seemed near. I put on all the strain I dared; the little rod bent double, but the tackle was new and held bravely, and presently I felt him draw clear. Away he went with another rush, ending in a furious splash. He had by this time been on quite three-quarters of an hour, and now he began to give a little, and I got in line till once more the net was picked up and held ready.

"Mind not to overbalance yourself as you net him," I was saying; "he is almost near enough now." In her eagerness K. made a false step, the boat lurched, and the heavy net came down with a splash that sent the fish off again, apparently as fresh as ever. Again he sounded, and in a minute that pestilential tall fly was fast in the weeds once more.

"Oh, *Lord!*" I said, "we're done for now; we can never hope to get him out safely a second time."

There he lay, alternately fighting and sulking for quite a quarter of an hour,

till my left arm began to feel the strain too much for it.

"This'll never do. I *must* try something," I said. "Hold the rod and I'll try hand lining him."

With a sigh of mingled apprehension and resignation K. took the rod, and very cautiously I began to haul on the line. "Confound it! I can't move him. What on earth are we to do? We can't sit here all night in the fog."

But, in an auspicious moment, something gave, and in a minute we were clear. Not much fight was left in him.

"We've got him! I do believe we've got him now!" said K.

"We're not out of the wood yet, I'm afraid," I said. "I doubt if he isn't too big for that net, and the light's bad for such work. I do wish we'd put the lantern in the boat. Look out, now. He's about near enough."

Over she stooped, and I hardly know which of us for the moment felt the more nervous. Many a big trout she had skilfully netted for me in daylight, but to get such a fish into a landing-net in such a light was another matter. Then I saw her cautiously put the net in the water, and in a second the head and shoulders of the great fish were safe, and she was struggling to lift him into the boat. But the tail and body were too heavy, and before we knew where we were he had slipped out, and was once more running out line. But it was his last chance; in a minute I had him back again, and this time there was no mistake. With a desperate struggle and a heave he was lifted into the boat and lay gasping there till I knocked him on the head. Then we struck matches and gloated over him.

"I believe he must be eight pounds," said K. "I never knew such big trout existed."

"Yes, he's every ounce of eight pounds," I said, "and I dare say there are bigger fish in the loch. I know

one of that weight was found dead on the shore last year, and they said that he was badly out of condition. Now let's get home."

But the question was, Where *was* home? We had utterly lost the bearings of the boat-house, and the loch was by no means small; it was useless to get ashore wherever we could and tie up the boat, for we should probably have no very clear idea on which side of the loch we had landed, and it was not a country to take chances in during such a fog. We *must* find the boat-house, and make a start for home from there.

At regular intervals we could hear the hoarse moan of the foghorn on the Head echoing around us, and to a certain extent that acted as a guide, but at times it was not easy to say which was horn and which echo. In whatever direction we headed the only end seemed to be that we found ourselves in a few minutes among beds of tall, swaying reeds, which the fog magnified till they looked like thickets of giant bamboos; and out from these thickets came low sounds and uncanny whisperings, as if horror unspeakable were stealthily closing in on us. To be really "bushed" is an experience unpleasant enough, even by daylight; but when in the dark you have utterly lost your bearings, when to the darkness is added thick, clammy fog, there comes in an element that rouses in you all the ghosts and goblins of childhood, goblins that have long slept, that one thought were dead and buried. And though the grown-up has gained self-control, still to most of us comes, in such circumstances, the old, eerie, childish feeling that a malignant *Something* is close upon us, lurking, waiting for a favorable chance to pounce—a Bunyip, perhaps, from the black water, or a spectre out of the wreathing fog. From what sources come the mysterious sounds of the night? What are

the voices that one hears as one lies under the stars out in the desert, or in the lonely Bush, calling, ever calling? Imagination? Nay! for men more bereft of imagination than a turnip hear them. Water? Again, no, for in such places there is no water. What are they?

The hour was getting on; it was already past midnight, as we found on striking a light, but yet we seemed as far from port as ever. At length, right ahead of us, looming threateningly like some huge rock, a dark, blurred mass resolved itself into the boat-house, and we wasted no time in making fast the boat and weighing our fish. Nine and three-quarter pounds—there are some who would say ten!"

And now came the task of piloting our way home. At first it was easy enough; there was a wall which gave us our course, but in a few hundred yards it was necessary to leave that and bear a little to our left. Now, in every one who is lost there is always the tendency to bear too much to the left. We had not managed to hit off the ill-defined track which we had followed in coming to the loch, and very soon we ran up against what seemed to be a steep hillside covered with whins, and of which in the fog no feature seemed to be familiar to us, though we had a dim recollection of having seen such a hill some distance away on the landward side of the path. Not enough to the left, we thought; so, putting our trust in the now plainly heard bellowing fog-horn we tried over a little more, and presently came on a faintly marked track. Now we were right, and joyfully we followed the path downhill.

"I don't remember coming up any place so steep as this, do you?" I said doubtfully. "However we may as well follow, it must lead somewhere." But it didn't; it was only a sheep walk, after all, and before going another

fifty yards we had lost all trace of any path, and by no hunting could we find it again.

"It seems to me we are getting too close to that horrible, moaning fog-horn. I hope we aren't near any of the cliffs," said K.

But it was impossible to remain where we were, our clothes saturated with the dripping moisture of the fog, and our boots squelching almost as if we had been wading in the loch. Cautiously we felt our way onward, and then from away below us, far down, came the crawling sound of the sea. We tried more to the right. Again a black void and the hungry sea, a horrible, awful nightmare, and it needed a strong effort to keep in check the tendency to panic. Where *were* we? We must have somehow got out on to one of the projecting points of land; but which way were we to turn to get off it again with safety?

"For heaven's sake keep close. If we separate now, even for a few yards, we'll perhaps never find each other again, and you'll be smashed to bits probably; both of us, maybe, in looking for each other," I said.

"Well, if we go, we may as well go together," said K., gripping my hand.

Again to the right we tried, and this time gradually the ground rose and the sound of the sea died away. Up and up we panted, and at last once more were on easy ground. Straight ahead we steered, at least as straight as we knew how to steer, rabbits every now and then scampering from under our feet, and once we nearly tumbled over a sleeping bullock. Whins pricked our legs, and anon we stumbled and fell among big stones.

With halts innumerable we kept on our way, and ever that trout, which I carried by a string through his gills, seemed to grow heavier and heavier, till I could have sworn that he was near a hundredweight, and the string was cutting my fingers almost to the bone. Had it not been for the shame of the thing, I think I should have quietly dropped him, to be a prize for the crows when the daylight came. But we were getting on, and now that we no longer feared the cliffs, our confidence was less shaken. There was at least no actual risk, we thought.

Then, once again, suddenly we halted, a feeling of insecurity in our minds, and even as we stopped, K.'s foot dislodged a stone which fell clanking from rock to rock. We had forgotten the quarry-holes! The old proverb that "things always begin to mend when they come to the worst" is of small consolation when that "worst" means the bottom of a quarry-hole or the foot of a cliff, and even the fact that "It will be all the same a hundred years hence" scarcely compensates for a broken neck. However, the "worst" in this case did not go beyond a few scratches and bruises, and after about another half-hour's wandering we ran up against a wall that led us to a gate, and the gate to a road. Another half-hour saw us home—whole, if not hearty—and the hour 2.30 A.M. And though we agreed next day, over a slice of cold trout with mayonnaise sauce, that he was worth it all, yet I do not think that either of us would willingly go through that nightmare again for all the trout in Scotland, nor again chance life and limb among those cliffs during a fog.

J. L.

## LIFE'S LITTLE DIFFICULTIES.

## THE WEDDING PRESENT.

## I.

From the Rev. Wilson Large to several of his parishioners, including Lady Fern, Mrs. Harrison Root, Miss Callow, Mrs. Pollard, Sir Anthony Dix, Mr. Horace Sparrow, and Mr. Jack Pyke-Luntin.

Dear —, — As you no doubt are aware, our friend and neighbor, Lord Clumber, after a period of lonely widowerhood is about to enter again into the bonds of wedlock with Miss Birdie Bangle, and it has been thought that, in addition to any little gift which we may individually be sending to him, some general token of our esteem and our desire as a community for his happiness would be timely and welcome. I write to you, as to several others of the leading residents in the neighborhood, to ask for your co-operation in this little scheme, and for your views as to the shape which the testimonial should take. My own idea is a timepiece, with a suitable inscription on a silver plate beneath the dial. Believe me.

Yours cordially,  
Wilson Large.

## II.

Mr. Jack Pyke-Luntin to the Rev.  
Wilson Large.

Dear Large,—If by timepiece you mean clock, I'm on. Of course old Clum has clocks to burn, but wedding presents don't count. It's the thought behind them. Put me down for a sovereign, and if I can help you by buying the clock when I go to town next, I will do so gladly. But you must give me all instructions very clearly.

Yours, J. Pyke-Luntin.

## III.

Miss Callow to the Rev. Wilson Large.

Dear Mr. Large,—Your news has made me a new woman. I have been so ill with rheumatism and general depression for so long, but the thought that dear Lord Clumber is again to be made happy has brightened every minute since your letter came. I like the idea of the clock—how very clever of you! Such unsuitable presents are often given on these, to me, sacred occasions, such even as spirit flasks and other unpleasantly material things. But of course you, with your views on temperance, would not have permitted anything like that. I enclose a cheque for two guineas.

Yours sincerely and gratefully,  
Ellen Callow.

## IV.

Lady Fern to the Rev. Wilson Large.

Dear Mr. Large,—I am both pained and shocked by the interest you are taking in this unfortunate marriage. When English noblemen marry dancing-girls it is the duty of the clergy to weep rather than organize wedding presents. Your scheme will receive no countenance from me, I remember poor Lady Clumber far too vividly. Any present that I may feel disposed to make will take an admunitory form, or I may possibly send a copy of Lord Avebury's *Pleasures of Life*.

Yours sincerely,  
Angela Fern.

## V.

The Rev. Wilson Large to Lady Fern.

My dear Lady Fern,—I was greatly distressed to find that your attitude to

Lord Clumber's engagement is so hostile. I fear, in your perhaps natural dislike to see a stranger in the late Lady Clumber's place, you have been betrayed into a slight error. You say a "dancing-girl," but I understand that Miss Bangle spoke quite a number of words in the last play at (I think) the Gaiety Theatre, and was very warmly praised for her imaginative treatment of the part by some of the leading critics. In any case I doubt if we ought to condemn dancing *qua* dancing. We have all danced a little in our time—I used, I remember, to be singularly happy in Sir Roger—and Miss Bangle may be a very worthy person in spite of her calling. It is enough for me that Lord Clumber has chosen her.

I am, dear Lady Fern,  
Yours cordially,  
Wilson Large.

## VI.

Sir Anthony Dix to the Rev. Wilson Large.

Dear Large,—It's a very good notion, but a clock is too dull. Birdie won't care for a clock at all; not unless she's very different from what she used to be. A motor coat would be much more in her line, or a tasty fan. I saw some beauties the other day in Bond Street. It's rather a joke for her to catch Clumber; and a good deal of a change for him after the late Lady C. I enclose a cheque for two pounds any way.

Yours truly, Anthony Dix.

## VII.

Mrs. Harrison Root to the Rev. Wilson Large.

Dear Mr. Large,—I cannot find that anyone staying in this Pension knows Miss Bangle's name, although there are several ladies who seem to be ardent

playgoers. But perhaps she has only just appeared in London. Mr. Benson, whom I know slightly, is always producing wonderful new Shakespearian actresses, and I imagine Miss Bangle to be one of these. But what an odd name!

Yours sincerely,  
Grace Harrison Root.

## VIII.

Mr. Horace Sparrow to the Rev. Wilson Large.

Dear Large,—I think your idea a good one, and I shall be glad to join. But is not a clock a rather unimaginative present? It always seems to me that insufficient thought is given to such matters. I have put down a few articles which my wife and I consider more suitable and original. Believe me,

Yours sincerely,  
Horace Sparrow.

Reading Lamp.  
Revolving Book-case.  
Complete set of Ruskin.  
After-dinner Coffee Set.

P.S.—Mrs. Sparrow and myself have derived more comfort from a breakfast heater than any other of our very numerous wedding presents.—H. S.

## IX.

Miss Effie Pollard to the Rev. Wilson Large.

Dear Mr. Large,—We think it such a charming idea of yours, and shall be delighted to assist. My mother is in favor of a butter-dish, but the clock seems to me an admirable thought. What could be prettier than a reminder such as this that another hour of happiness has passed, and that so many friends have good wishes for the new life! As I tell mother, she can give the butter-dish independently, if you think that our one visit to Clumber Towers, on the occasion of the Mis-

sionary Helpers' Union annual fête, a sufficient ground. Meanwhile I enclose a postal order for a pound, and remain yours sincerely,

Effie Pollard.

X.

The Rev. Wilson Large to Mrs. Harrison Root.

Dear Mrs. Root,—I am happy to be able to tell you that everything is in train for the wedding present for Lord Clumber. Mr. Pyke-Luntin has very kindly arranged to buy the clock in London, in a shop in Bond Street where I saw them, and to arrange for a suitable inscription. The *Tatler* which you send me is very interesting. Miss Bangle has certainly a very charming face, but it seems to me to border too much on familiarity to call her plain "Birdie" underneath. Lord Clumber can hardly like that. Still,

Punch.

it is not for me to sit in judgment. Believe me, dear Mrs. Root,

Yours cordially,  
Wilson Large.

XI.

Mr. Jack Pyke-Luntin to the Rev. Wilson Large.

Dear Large,—I am sorry to say that the fog yesterday was too much for me altogether, and made it impossible to get to Bond Street. But I managed to struggle as far as the Stores, and I think you will be delighted with what I managed to secure—a real bargain. They had no clocks worth anything, and so I hopped on to this—a first-class Tantalus. It is being engraved to-day, and should reach you to-morrow. I know old Clum will appreciate that, and he's got clocks enough already to tick his head off.

Yours sincerely,  
J. Pyke-Luntin.

THE QUEEN'S MAN.

A ROMANCE OF THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

CHAPTER I.

Sir William Roden, Knight, had made his will, and the long parchment lay upon the table. He had left large benefactions to the poor, and to the parish church; he had given exact directions for his burial in the chapel north of the choir (where his wife and his two sons already lay), as to the torches that were to be carried in his funeral procession and the tapers to be burnt upon his grave for seven years after and on every anniversary following, as to the prayers for his soul to be said in that same chapel (which indeed he had built) by an honest priest of good conversation, for a period of time that he did not

think it necessary to limit. The dim future might be safely left to the care of God, and to the piety of his one dear grandchild and her descendants. To her, Margaret Roden, he left everything; the castle and manor of Ruddiford, with all its estates and tene- ments, farms, mills, pastures, market dues, and advantages of every kind, and the household goods of which he added a long inventory. And, in case the rheumatism which racked his limbs should kill him while she was still young and unmarried, he committed her to the care and guardianship of the Lady Isabel, Baroness Marlowe, the widow of his oldest friend, praying her to take Margaret into her own house, and to provide

for the trusty management of her property till she should be married or of age. And in all these matters he prayed her ladyship to take counsel with the executors of this last will of his, namely, her step-son the Lord Marlowe, Sir Thomas Pye the Vicar of Ruddiford, and the Masters Simon and Timothy Toste, brothers, the doctor and the lawyer, in whom he placed confidence. And so, with many pious words, he ended his testament.

"Now read it in our ears, my good Timothy," he said.

The attorney obeyed him, his thin voice ringing through such silence as could be had on that November afternoon, with the great west wind rattling the lattices and roaring in the wide chimney. There was an unearthly pause, the stillness of death for a minute or two, through which the voice piped clearly; then the thundering waves came rolling up once more over moor and meadow and forest, and the wind yelled and screeched with more fury for the long breath it had taken.

Logs were burning on the hearth, and Sir William, a noble-looking old man with a white beard, was sitting in his high carved chair close to the chimney-corner, his velvet gown folded round his knees. In the middle of the vaulted room, his own room, reached by a short flight of steps from the castle hall, four persons sat opposite to him at a table, one of them reading, the other three listening to the will, the contents of which they all knew already; for three of them were executors, and the fourth, Sir William's secretary, had acted as clerk to Timothy Toste on the occasion.

The two listening old friends,—Sir Thomas the Vicar, thin and tall, with a face like a turnip-lanthorn, so did the spirit shine through the starved-looking flesh, and Simon Toste the apothecary, fat, short, with a beam-

ing smile that almost undid the harm of his medicines—shook their heads simultaneously as they realized the unbounded confidence their patron was placing in the Lady Marlowe. The secretary smiled faintly as he watched them, seeming to read their thought. He was a marvellously handsome young man, an Italian, brought to England when a boy by John Roden, Sir William's son, who had lived much abroad and had married a Venetian lady at the court of King René of Anjou. These two had followed the Princess Margaret when she came to England as the bride of Henry the Sixth, and both had died of the English fogs, leaving as a legacy to Sir William their small page Antonio, picked up as a beggar in the street, and their precious little daughter, the Queen's godchild, Margaret. Before this time, William Roden, the knight's elder son, had been killed in a brawl in London streets, dying unmarried, so that the baby child was the one hope of the house of Ruddiford.

Both children, Antonio being seven years older than Margaret and her slave and play-fellow, thrived wonderfully in the chilly northern air and hardy life of the castle. Sir William, the most simple-minded of men, had watched them growing up and developing side by side, stronger and more beautiful every day, and had given no thought to the probable end of this childish intimacy, or to the necessity of providing his grandchild with some other companion than the low-born, velvet-eyed foreign boy, till Master Simon Toste plucked up courage to speak to him on the subject. Then Sir William, unwillingly convinced, did the easiest thing that came to hand, sending to his neighbors the Tilneys at King's Hall, half a dozen miles away, and proposing that their daughter Alice, a couple of years older than Margaret, should come to Ruddiford and

live with her for an indefinite time. This proposal being kindly received, he was satisfied, and would not listen for a moment to Simon Toste's further advice,—“Send the Italian fellow back to Italy.” Sir William was fond of Antonio, who knew how to make himself indispensable, and who now very easily, as it seemed, transferred his caressing ways from Mistress Margaret to her grandfather. The old man was growing helpless. Antonio became his devoted personal attendant as well as his capable secretary. Though the steward, the bailliff, the town officials, the men-at-arms even (for Ruddiford had its little garrison) were disposed to sneer at receiving Sir William's orders frequently by the mouth of Antonio, they had no real fault to find. He did no harm to any one. If he had any evil passions or wild ambitions, they were kept well in check. He was a foreigner, with a clever head and a face of classical beauty. Perhaps this was enough to make the sturdy Midlanders hate him. With women, as a rule, he did as he pleased, though no scandal had yet touched him, and through his discretion no one knew that Mistress Alice Tilney had fallen desperately in love with him.

This young girl's parents had both died of the pestilence since she came to live at Ruddiford, and King's Hall had now fallen into the hands of her brother, Jasper Tilney, who kept house there with a set of wild and daring companions, and had lately given great offence to Sir William Roden by coming forward as a suitor for Margaret. The estates marched: this was his only excuse for such presumption; and Sir William refused his offer with a cold politeness very near contempt, thus turning his neighbor into a troublesome enemy.

Such was the state of affairs when Sir William Roden made his will; and

beyond the boundaries of Ruddiford and King's Hall, the war of the Red and White Roses, in that year of our Lord 1460, was desolating the land in its wandering, changing way. At this moment, the party of the White Rose had the best of it, and King Henry was a prisoner in their hands, while the Queen and the young Prince were fugitives in Scotland.

“That is my will,” Sir William said loudly, when Timothy ceased to read. “Now to sign it. But we must have witnesses. Go, Tony, call a couple of fellows who can write; Nick Steward for one, the parish clerk for t'other. You might have brought him with you, master Parson.”

The secretary rose readily enough, but looked askance, as he did so, at the three old executors. They were putting their heads together, muttering doubtfully. Antonio's dark and brilliant eyes, glancing from them to his master, seemed to convey to him the consciousness of disapproval on their part.

“What's the matter?” the Knight cried sharply, and his impatient temper surged up red into his pale cheeks. “What are you plotting, you three? Anything wrong with the will? Keep your fault-finding till I ask for it. Your business is not to carp, but to carry out faithfully. Fetch the witnesses, you rascal, Tony. Am I to be obeyed? —Well, Parson, say your say.”

“It is about these Marlowes, Sir William,” said the Vicar.

“Ay, Sir Thomas, and what about them? My oldest friends, remember.”

“A friendship of a long while back, if I am not mistaken.”

“And pray, sir, is it the worse for that? A long while back? Yes, from the field of Agincourt,—not that it began then. We were brothers in arms. Marlowe and I. King Harry knighted us both with his own hand, after the battle. He bound us for ever to his

service, and that of his son. Ah, in those days, England wanted no one but Harry. He was our man, a man indeed! All these Yorks, with their false pretty faces and curly pates,—away with 'em! I'll leave Meg in the charge of a good Lancastrian, and though I have not seen Harry Marlowe for years, I know he is as true a man as his father, God rest him. Well, Parson, what maggot have you got in that wise head of yours?"

Thomas Pye listened patiently. He knew very well that his patron, once fairly off on the legend of Agincourt and the friends of his youth, would not be checked by reason. Indeed, Sir William was at no time very reasonable. With charming qualities, he was a wilful man, and it was sometimes easier to lead him in small matters than in great. If once convinced in his own mind, opposition was apt to be useless. The good men of Ruddiford took him as he was and followed him meekly, except where Mistress Margaret was concerned. There, love and duty gave them courage, and they spoke their minds, as little Simon had done in the case of Antonio.

"We are all mortal, Sir William," said the Vicar. "I hope from my heart that you may live twenty years longer, by which time this will of yours will signify nothing, so far as it affects your granddaughter. But you may die next week, Sir."

"Without doubt, Thomas," said Sir William, smiling and stroking his beard. "I have provided for that, as you hear."

"Ah! You have left Margaret's entire future in the hands of this Lady Marlowe, the second wife of your old friend."

"A most religious lady of high birth and great position."

"Ah! My brother, who lives at Coventry, and who had some work as a lawyer with the Parliament, was in

London a month ago. He heard that the Earl of March had,—slanderous tongues will talk—had visited the Lady Marlowe at her house in Buckinghamshire."

Sir William laughed aloud. "She is a woman of fifty, at least," he said. "Your brother might have been better employed than in listening to such tales, my good Thomas."

The Vicar blushed. "You misinterpret me," he said. "I was thinking of politics. They say, plainly speaking, that a Yorkist success would bring over the Lady Marlowe and her large influence to that side. There is some enmity between her and the Queen—"

"I do not believe it," said Sir William. "The Lady Isabel would never be so disloyal to her husband's memory. Besides, her son would see to that. You will tell me next that Harry Marlowe is a follower of York!"

"Harry Marlowe,—do you know what they call that unfortunate man, Sir William?"

The old Knight stared at him with wide blue eyes. "On my faith," he said, "you talk like a crazy fellow, Thomas Pye."

"They call him Mad Marlowe. They say that a few years ago, when he disappeared for a time and was said to be abroad, his step-mother was compelled to put him in chains for his violence. He recovered, mercifully. He is a good Lancastrian, yes, for what he is worth. He follows the Queen everywhere, or journeys on her business. A true man, I believe, but—" the Vicar touched his forehead significantly.

"Why did I not hear all these tales before I made my will?" growled Sir William.

"I heard them from my brother but yesterday. Master Timothy had already drawn out your will, but I knew little of its particulars. You will not sign it, I hope, in its present

form? You will not leave your grandchild in the hands of these persons?"

"Is your brother here?"

"No, Sir William. He has gone back to Coventry."

Then followed a short and sharp argument, at the end of which Sir William Roden flew into one of those rages which had often harmed himself and those dear to him. He spoke words of such violence to the Vicar, that this excellent man strode erect out of the castle, back to his house beside the church, shaking the dust off his feet and leaving the foolish old Knight to do as he pleased with his own. Timothy and Simon quailed beneath the old man's furious anger and soon fled also in a less dignified fashion. Antonio hastily fetched two witnesses; the will was signed as it stood, and locked away in Sir William's great chest, with the other deeds of the estate.

When all this was done, Sir William became calm, and sat for a long time silent by the fire. The raging wind had fallen; there was no sound in the room but the crackling of the logs, and now and then the pushing of benches, the clatter of steel, and the hum of voices in the hall below. Antonio sat at the table, his face in his hands, and watched the old man between his fingers. He loved him in his cat-like way, and admired his high spirit and suddenly flaming temper. It gave him a thrill of physical pleasure to see those three wise worthies discredited and driven out like a set of fools by Sir William's proud loyalty to his old traditions and the name of his earliest friend. What did it matter if the Vicar was right, if these Marlowes were unworthy of the trust to be placed in them? It might not be any the worse, in the end, for Antonio.

A low whistle from the old master fetched him to his feet. It was the call of his childhood, to which he had

answered always like a dog, fearless of the fiery temper that kept most people on their guard. Next probably to his grandchild, though with a long interval and on a different plane altogether, Sir William loved this other legacy from the handsome, luxurious, wandering younger son who had come home to Ruddiford only to die.

Antonio made two steps across the floor and crouched before Sir William, whose thin hand fumbled with his black mop of hair.

"Tony, I hate to be thwarted," he said.

"And it is the worse for those who thwart you," murmured the Italian. "You send them skipping, dear Sir," and he showed his white teeth, laughing silently.

"Peace, rascal, no irreverence," said the old man. "Sir Thomas is a saint; but what should move him to listen to that peddling brother of his against my noble friends, and to expect me—me!—to change my plan for his scandalous gossiping? He might have considered,—here is Meg sixteen years old and more—I may die next week,—tonight, for that matter,—Tony, I may die to-night."

"No, no," the young man murmured soothingly; "but if you did, there is the will safely made."

"No thanks to those three fools," said Sir William. "Yes, 'tis safely made; but if I had listened to them, and died,—or even did I live to make another, in these frightful times, how could I devise to protect Margaret? Her old nurse and Alice Tilney against the world! No marriage arranged for,—Jasper Tilney bold as the very devil,—he and his Fellowship might step in and carry her off before she could reach safety with the Abbess of Coleford! There, to the abbey, she would have to go, and Alice with her, for in her own castle she would not be safe. Yes, by our Lady, and as I hope to be saved, the will is not enough, Tony.

Fetch your ink and pens. You will write a letter to my Lady Marlowe; you will tell her of the trust I have placed in her and Harry, and of the whole state of things here; you will bid her send a person, with authority from herself, to take charge of my grandchild if need arises, and in case of my death or any other accident to fetch her away to Swanlea or elsewhere, if it be her will. We shall have men enough for an escort,—unless indeed my Lady finds Meg a husband in the meanwhile, who can enter into possession here and guard his wife and her estates. Well, well, all this in good time. Light up your candles, throw on another log, and sit down and write as I bid you. My Lady go over to York, because of the issue of one battle! I would as soon believe it of my old friend Marlowe himself. She is a woman of spirit, and if it be true that Edward of March visited her, I warrant you she received him so that he will scarce do it again. Farrago of tales! Haste, Tony! Black Andrew shall ride south this very night with the letter."

It was a difficult letter to write, for the Knight's directions were long and wandering, like his talk; but Antonio was a fine scribe, with a clever way of putting things, and also spelt English better than many an Englishman. There was something to touch the most worldly heart in the frank and simple confidence, the perfect trust in her loyalty, with which Sir William Roden committed his young grandchild's future into Lady Marlowe's friendly keeping. And this letter, which was the direct consequence of the Vicar's warning intervention, and which, far more effectually than the locked-up will, decided the future of Margaret Roden and of Ruddiford, was carried south in the small hours of the next morning by an armed messenger in Sir William's livery of yellow laced with gold.

## CHAPTER II.

"Sit you down and sing to me, my sweetheart, my golden Meg. Why do you stand there, staring at the snow?"

The old man's voice, impatient, but soft as it always became when he spoke to his grandchild, broke suddenly on the silence of the room.

It was Christmas Eve, and the afternoon was closing in; there was a clamor of church bells from the town, a distant noise of shouting and trumpeting in the streets, where mummers and morris-dancers were pacing forth on their way up to the castle. The still air was laden with snow; wild November had given way to the hard grip of a most wintry December, and all that northern midland country was snowed up and frozen. The deep clay-stained stream of the Ruddy, winding between willow copses through the flat meadows on which Ruddiford Castle looked down, was covered with ice, though not yet hard enough to bear man and horse, so that the usual ford some way below the bridge was a difficulty, and all the country traffic had to pass over Sir William's bridge under the castle wall. The road that led to the ford was deep in snow; that which ended at the bridge was already well furrowed and trampled. The guard at the bridge tower, which defended its further entrance, while the castle gates commanded its narrow twisting length, its projecting piers and niches for foot passengers, had enough to do in receiving Sir William's tolls from horse and cart and wagon, as the country people pressed in to the Christmas market.

It was not only the white and gray wilderness, the heavy shadow of the woods that swept away beyond the meadows, the frozen river and moving peasant figures on the bridge, that kept Margaret Roden's eyes employed as

she stood in her grandfather's window. At this moment, under the heavy snow-clouds, a flood of glowing yellow light poured out and glorified all that desolate world. The bridge, the tower, the polished, shining river, a band of horsemen with flashing lances and fluttering pennons who rode up from the south,—all this became suddenly like a hard, brilliant illumination in some choice book of prayers. Margaret forgot to answer her grandfather, so busy was she in gazing down at the bridge, and Sir William's own thoughts were distracted by something which told him,—the knowledge coming rather as a shock—that in the last few months his pet child had grown into a woman, and a beautiful one too. It was a most lovely picture, of which he had only a side view from within; the exquisite lines of Margaret's figure, the perfect shape of her head and neck, the warm coloring of the cheek, the masses of soft red-brown hair, which, far away from courts and fashions, she wore unconventionally as she and her old nurse pleased. The setting sun in its glory bathed this young figure, standing in the broad new window of Sir William's room, the window which he had made for his son John's sake, to let in the south and the sun.

"My golden Meg," he repeated, half to himself, as his eyes followed the broad track of sunshine on the rush-strewn floor. Then he went on muttering: "Christmas here, and no answer from my Lady! If she could see the girl now, she would not fear the charge of her."

A trumpet-call rang through the air. Meg stepped closer to the window, threw back the lattice suddenly and leaned out, so that she might see the whole length of the bridge.

Sir William's guard at the tower had not delayed that troop of riders long, and they were now crossing the bridge at a foot's pace. Their leader, a tall

man almost unarmed, riding a richly trapped horse and wearing a velvet cap with young Prince Edward's badge of a silver swan, was stooping wearily on his saddle when he rode in from the heavy country ways. But from the middle of the bridge he looked up at the castle; and there he saw the great window set suddenly open, and the vision of a girl looking down upon him,—"like a saint from the windows of heaven," as he said afterwards. For the full golden glory of the light rested upon her, and all the rugged old keep shone like the ramparts of the clouds, and Sir William Roden's yellow banner, heavy with the embroidery of her hands, rose slowly from the flag-staff on the leads and flapped high above her head in the breath of the evening.

The stranger looked for a moment or two, his face, thin and dark, with heavy eyes weary of the way, lifted towards Margaret, who in all her young womanly beauty bent upon him the intent, wondering gaze of a child. Then he bared his brown head and bowed down to his horse's neck; then he looked up again, riding very slowly, and so, still with eyes aloft and a new flame of life in them, passed out of Margaret's sight into the shadow of the walls.

"Meg! What do you see down there, child?"

The question was quick and imperious. It startled Mistress Meg, who for the last few minutes had quite forgotten her grandfather's presence. She turned, and clanged the lattice to. At the same moment the snow-cloud came down and smothered the struggling sun in his five minutes' victory. The room became dark, except for the flickering flames under the chimney.

Meg could not answer her grandfather, for in good faith she did not know who or what she had seen. Some one she had never seen before, and must see again,—yes, if all the

armies of York and Lancaster were between! which they were not, for her keen senses were very conscious of sounds below, of an honored guest arriving. He,—he, whose look and bearing, even at that distance, had taught her something she had never known—a few minutes, and he would be standing in the room, talking with her grandfather, looking at her once more. Was he old? Was he young? Was he the King himself, Henry of Lancaster, into whose dark and gentle eyes she had looked up once as a child? Was he one of King Arthur's knights come back from fairy-land,—Sir Launcelot, perhaps, of whom her nurse had told her the story?

She came silently forward, took her lute and touched the strings; but she could not sing, for her heart was beating so that it choked her. "It was, Grandfather," she said, coming nearer to him, "it was a troop of horse that crossed the bridge."

"Whose men? Not Jasper Tilney's? Was he there himself?"

"He? Yes,—oh no, no, not Jasper Tilney—a knight, a prince, a noble lord—how should I know?" the girl said, then laughed and broke off suddenly.

The door of the room was opened, and two servants carried in tall copper candlesticks, with wax candles lighted, which they set down upon the table. Then Antonio came swiftly in, with a side-glance at Margaret, and stood before his master. "Sir, the Lord Marlowe asks to be received by your worship. He brings letters from my Lady his mother."

"Ha! His Lordship is very welcome."

With some difficulty Sir William lifted his stiffened limbs from his chair, and advanced a few steps towards the stairs, leaning heavily on his stick, which hardly seemed support enough for him. Margaret and Antonio moved forward at the same instant to

help him. Their eyes met, and the Italian, as if commanded, fell back suddenly and stood like a servant in the background. A pretty, fair girl slipped into the room and passed close to his shoulder, going round to wait upon Margaret. As she went, she lingered long enough to breathe in his ear, "Who is this?" and the young man answered in the same whisper, inaudible to the others, "Mad Marlowe." He smiled as he spoke. "Oh, no danger then!" murmured Alice Tilney, her wild brother's partisan in secret, though in Sir William's presence she dared not name Jasper. Antonio only smiled again.

Way-worn, and wet with snow, Lord Marlowe was ushered into the room by the old steward and the other servants. He was a tall slender man of thirty-five or thereabouts, with a slight stoop of the shoulders; his face was long, brown and delicate, with dark hazel eyes that were strangely attractive and sweet, yet shining with a sort of wildness, or rather a wistful melancholy. His hair, ruffled into untidy curls by the wind, gave him a look more picturesque than courtly. His eyes passed quickly over Sir William Roden, the noble old man who was moving to meet him with words of cordial welcome, to glow with a brown flame as he fixed them on Margaret. She looked up half shyly under her long lashes; he could hardly see the color of the eyes they hid, but his vision of the window stood before him in breathing flesh and blood, and Harry Marlowe, used to courts, tired of a world he knew too well, seemed to see a lost ideal once more in this child, as innocent as she was lovely. Not that he dreamed, at first, of offering this country beauty, his stepmother's young *protégée*, anything but the admiration, touched with a fugitive thrill of passion, which such a face must rouse in any man not stockish and a tasteless

fool. But he said between his teeth, to the bewilderment of those who caught the words, "By heaven! too good for the Popinjay!"

Courtier, even more than soldier, as Harry Marlowe was, his manner had the bold unconventionality of a man who cares little what his company may think of him. Bowing low to Sir William, he addressed his first words to the girl on whose arm the old Knight was leaning. "My fair lady, your humble servant greets you well," he said. "I heard of you from far; I saw you, all crowned with gold, leaning from the window to welcome me,—and yet I think you had no news of my coming?"

"None, my Lord," said Margaret, and she trembled; for now the strange hero had bent on his knee before her, and her hand lay small and warm on his long cold fingers, and was touched once, twice, by eager lips that seemed to leave a print of fire. Mistress Margaret felt herself flushing all over face and neck. The fearless young girl was now afraid to look up, to meet his eyes again, but she forced herself to one short, shy glance, and immediately the question thundered in her brain, "If this be only courtesy, what then is love?" She heard his voice speaking to her grandfather, but did not understand what he said, for the very realizing of his presence seemed enough for her whole being; a power, sweet yet terrible, held body and soul.

Now, after some ceremonious phrases, Sir William and Lord Marlowe sat down opposite each other, while Margaret stood by her grandfather's chair with her hand on his shoulder; for some mysterious reason the close neighborhood of that faithful old love seemed the one safe place.

These three were not alone. Alice Tilney, staring and laughing uneasily, and Dame Kate, the old nurse in a great hood, stood behind Margaret in

the shadow; and on the other side, the dark and pale face of Antonio, with his inscrutable smile, far handsomer than the Englishman, though lacking his distinction and attractiveness, hovered like a ghost behind Lord Marlowe's chair. The servants passed out one by one, leaving the end of the room in twilight; the fire crackled and flamed, but neither it nor the two high candles were enough to light the large vaulted space. Only that central group of three, between the table and the fire, were very clearly to be seen.

Sir William talked with great satisfaction, and Lord Marlowe listened, with eyes no longer bent upon Margaret; for he was a gentleman, and would neither embarrass a lady nor neglect a venerable host. In the ears of all present Sir William talked of his will, and of the contents of the letter he had sent to Lady Marlowe. It seemed an immense relief to him to speak of all this to the person authorized to hear, whom it really concerned, for this same Harry Marlowe was one of his executors.

As he talked of his anxious wish to leave Margaret in safe and friendly keeping, Lord Marlowe kept his eyes bent upon the ground. He hardly looked up when he said: "But you will live long, Sir. You surely do not wish to part with Mistress Margaret before it is necessary? You do not wish to commit her now to my mother's care? From your letter, my Lady thought that was the case, but I cannot believe it."

"Fore God, I hardly know what I wish," said the Knight with a laugh. "I want her safe from knaves, and 'tis only fools that surround me. Your co-executors, my Lord, are as honest men as you will find south of the Trent; one of them is a saint, indeed, and the other two have wits enough to furnish four, but for all that they are senseless fools, swallowing every grain of gossip.

And were I to die all of a sudden, as the apothecary warns me I likely shall, why, I could hardly trust these fellows to watch over Margaret till your mother was pleased to send for her. They are most likely to let a certain knave step in and carry her off, just because he is a good Lancastrian, his only merit,—ay, Mistress Alice, I know you are behind there, but a man may be on the right side and yet on the wrong—a Lancastrian and a brigand, eh?"

There was a short silence, for the Knight's words might well be hard to understand.

"Do I follow you, Sir?" Lord Marlowe asked.

He lifted his eyes slowly, and there was an angry line across his brow. Almost as if against his will, he found himself looking at Margaret, not at her grandfather, and for a moment the girl met steadily those wonderful eyes, full of light from a world she did not know. Then apparently Harry forgot what he was going to say, forgot a momentary vexation at the hint that some country fools did not believe in the loyalty of his family, and would step in, if they could, between Margaret and the guardians her grandfather had chosen. He spoke no more, but fell into a dream. Sir William stared at him curiously. "You, then, my Lord, are the person with authority, whom I begged her Ladyship to send here to me?"

"I am her envoy, no doubt," Lord Marlowe answered. "As to my message, my mission, we are not alone, and I—"

"You are tired and wet, I ask your pardon for forgetting it," said Sir William graciously, raising himself in his chair. "Tony, show his lordship to the guest-chamber,—tell them to bring wine and meat; you are over-wrought, my Lord, you have ridden far. In the meanwhile, did I not hear something

of letters from my Lady Marlowe?"

"Ah,—letters,—pardon me!" Harry's fingers wandered to his pouch, but did not open it. He rose suddenly to his feet and made a step towards Sir William. "You see me, sir," he went on, eagerly, "your old friend's son. Think of me so, I beseech you, and not as the step-son of my Lady Marlowe. Let me stand alone; and now, let us be alone, Sir William."

A watchful look came into the old Knight's eyes. The movement and the words, both eccentric, the dreamy manner, as of a man walking in his sleep—all this suggested a chilly fear that the parson might have been right after all, that Lord Marlowe's mind was not quite evenly balanced. Sir William looked beyond his strange guest and met the eyes of Antonio, who stooped forward into the light, his lips moving, and shook his head warningly.

"We are alone, my Lord, to all intents and purposes," Sir William said, with dignity. "My granddaughter is here, the person most concerned,—you cannot, I think, have that to say which she may not hear—her old nurse, her trusted friend Mistress Tilney, and my secretary, who is to me as a son. Say what you please, my Lord."

"Good! then I must repeat my task without question," Harry answered very gravely, looking on the floor. "My stepmother, after debating how she could best carry out your wishes, instructed me to ask Mistress Margaret Roden's hand in marriage for my—"

"Yourself, my Lord!"

Where did the words come from? They were spoken in a loud, strained whisper, which whistled on the air and almost echoed round the room. Every one started, and looked at someone else,—every one, except Lord Marlowe. He stopped short for a moment, then ended his sentence with the word, "Myself!"

The sensation in the room was extraordinary; the very silence thrilled with astonishment. Sir William opened his blue eyes wide, his mouth gaping in the depths of his snowy beard. Antonio shook his head again, smiling more intensely; it seemed, indeed, as if he checked a laugh with difficulty. Alice Tilney frowned, the picture of consternation. As to the two persons most concerned, they looked at each other across the glowing space that separated them. Margaret was trembling; the wonder of it all held her breathless, but the fear in her eyes had given place to a wild, incredulous joy. Could it be that this knight, this hero, was actually asking for her hand,—Meg Roden, so young, so foolish, so ignorant? How had it come about? There was some mystery in it. However, so it was, and now Lord Marlowe's eyes, eager and adoring, were repeating the wonderful request to hers that met them so sweetly. Whether that strange whisper, coming no one knew whence, had been a fresh command or a bold guess at his intention, it had hit the mark; he now, at least, meant to ask and to have. After a moment's delay he repeated more loudly, though with a slight tremulousness, the word "Myself."

Then he made a step nearer Sir William, and bowed twice to him and to Margaret, who still stood with one hand on the old man's shoulder. It was plain that he expected his answer on the spot.

"You do us great honor, my Lord," the Knight began, stammering a little in his surprise. "'Tis sudden, though—and yet, Harry Marlowe, the son of my old brother in arms, is the man I should have chosen out of all England—so my Lady guessed, I suppose. But, pardon me, 'tis sudden, my Lord."

"Sir, I am on my way to join the Queen," Lord Marlowe said. "There is no time for delays and circumventions;

a soldier must snatch at his own life as he can, and you know it, no man better, Sir William. Let me hear from Mistress Margaret's own sweet lips that she does not hate me; then give me my wife to-morrow, and the next morning shall see me on my way. My mother shall fetch my wife home to Swanlea, either in person or by a trusty escort. You are satisfied, Sir William?"

He came nearer, bent on one knee close to the old Knight's chair, held up his hand imploringly to Margaret, who instantly laid hers in it, for with him, it seemed, to ask was to command. Yet his manner was gentleness itself, the manner of a man never brutal, but always victorious.

"Good Lord! Madder than the maddest!" Antonio muttered in the background; but the smile died from his red lips and he turned a little pale. For the madman seemed likely to have his crazy way.

Old Sir William made an impatient movement. "Hear you, my Lord? You are too sudden," he said. "Do you think my granddaughter can be married off like a beggar in a ditch? There shall be no such haste, I tell you. Why, five minutes ago, you could not believe that I wished to part with her at all. Your courtship has gained in pace amazingly. And you forget, Sir; you have not yet handed me my Lady Marlowe's letters."

Harry started up, smiling, and with a quick touch of the lips releasing the young hand he held. "You have the best of me, Sir, and I ask your pardon," he said. "Letters, yes; but what are pen and ink but inventions of the devil for confusing men's minds? As to these letters, which are indeed addressed to you and to this fair lady, they are needless now. I am my own ambassador." He looked with a queer smile at the packet in his hand, stepped across the floor and dropped

it straight into the reddest heart of the fire.

"I see it. I thought as much," Antonio muttered. "Ay, my Lord,—too good for the Popinjay!"

As the letters flamed, carrying their secret in smoke up the chimney. Harry Marlowe turned on the hearth, bold, graceful, laughing, to face the frowning brow and angry puzzled eyes of the old man in the chair.

But a great noise which had been

growing for some minutes before, now stormed the shallow staircase and poured into the room. A crowd of Christmas mummers masked and in antic dresses, St. George, the Dragon, and the rest, with loud shouts and songs and clatter of halberds and tin swords, prancing round in their time-honored, privileged revels, effectually interrupted my Lord Marlowe's love-making.

(*To be continued.*)

Macmillan's Magazine.

### THE SONNETS OF SHAKESPEARE.\*

There is no more perilous emprise in literature than the editing of Shakespeare's Sonnets. In an antre vast, approached by CLIV. slippery and breakneck steps, the Friend and the Lady sit shrouded in a horror of thick darkness, and the bones of the commentators whiten around them. No one has achieved the adventure, few have even essayed it with impunity. Happy the wight who has come forth from that sorry place without leaving his sanity, his logic, or at the very least his manners, behind him. Mr. Beeching is one of the fortunate few. His edition of the Sonnets is a model of ripe scholarship, sound judgment, and temperate utterance. "In other words," says the cynical reader, "his conclusions happen to agree with yours!" In the main, they do; but even were it otherwise, I hope I should have the grace to recognize the closeness of Mr. Beeching's reasoning and the urbanity of his style.

It is a testimony to the humarer

spirit of latter-day scholarship that the book should be dedicated in the most cordial terms to Mr. Sidney Lee, whose luckless theory of the Sonnets it controverts on almost every page. Mr. Beeching fully acknowledges the great service Mr. Lee has rendered in demonstrating the close relationship of the Elizabethan sonnet in general to the Italian and French models which set the fashion. In this field, as in so many others, Mr. Lee's labors have been invaluable. But Mr. Beeching shows (though he might, perhaps, have made the point more explicitly) that, while they doubtless present certain conventional features, Shakespeare's Sonnets are distinguished from the innumerable quatorzains of his contemporaries precisely by their unconventionality. "Perhaps," says Mr. Beeching, "Mr. Lee a little overstates the case, strong as it is, for the artificiality of the emotion displayed in the Elizabethan sonnets." But we need not insist on this peradventure. If every

\* "The Sonnets of Shakespeare." With an Introduction and Notes by H. C. Beeching, M.A., D.Litt. (Athenaeum Press Series. Boston, U. S. A., and London: Ginn and Co., 1904.)

"Shakespeare Self-Revealed in His 'Sonnets' and 'Phoenix and Turtle.'" The Texts with Introduction and Analyses by J. M. (London and Manchester: Sherratt and Hughes, 1904.)

other sonnet in the language were purely artificial it would not alter the fact that the majority of Shakespeare's Sonnets manifestly are not. The story they set forth, though baffling as regards the personality of the actors, is otherwise clear, definite, consistent, bound down at many points to details of common life, and utterly remote, in all its characteristic passages, from Platonism or make-believe. Who would dream of inventing such a story? Who would deliberately compose so pitiful a drama and then cast himself for the pitifullest part? Strange indeed, as Mr. Beeching points out, are some of the "flatteries" Shakespeare addresses to his munificent "patron"; and though reproaches to his mistress are doubtless part of the conventional rhetoric of the ordinary sonneteer, what Delia, or Diana, or Idea was ever reproached in the terms in which Shakespeare lashes and brands the Dark Lady? There is realism, psychological and physical, in every line of these sonnets. Mr. Beeching puts the case mildly, but very happily, when he says:

It by no means follows because a poet uses a fashionable and artificial form of verse that the emotion he puts into it is merely fashionable and artificial. It may be or it may not be. We must not forget that, although the sonnet was fashionable at this epoch, the passion of love had perhaps as great a vogue as the sonnet.

Mr. Beeching adduces a new argument for assigning the bulk of the sonnets to the very last years of the sixteenth century. He says:

Every writer knows the perverse facility with which a phrase once used presents itself again; and Shakespeare seems to have been not a little liable to this literary habit. It is not uncommon for him to use a word or a phrase twice in a single play, and never after-

wards. There is a strong probability, therefore, if a remarkable phrase or figure of speech occurs both in a sonnet and in a play, that the play and the sonnet belong to the same period.

He then cites several striking instances of this word-recurrence, which would seem to make the Sonnets contemporary with *Henry IV.*, *Hamlet*, and other plays of the middle period in Shakespeare's career. This argument (which must not be confounded with the argument from "parallel passages") is ingenious and interesting; but it has a logical defect which will be hard to overcome. Before we can attach much weight to the word-recurrences which Mr. Beeching points out, we must be satisfied that similar word-recurrences are *not* to be found on comparing the Sonnets with plays of an earlier period. It is notoriously difficult to prove a negative; and until this negative is proved, Mr. Beeching's reasoning remains inconclusive.

Mr. Beeching decidedly rejects the Southampton theory of the Sonnets, and doubtfully inclines to accept the Pembroke theory. In both cases his argument is delightfully acute and concise. Every word tells. One may perhaps except the suggestion that the phrase "onlie begetter" in Thorpe's dedication could not refer to the procurer of the manuscript, because "only begotten" is so familiar an English phrase that "only" could hardly be used with "beget" if the verb had an unusual sense." That "begetter" did not mean "procurer" I cordially agree; but the force of this particular argument eludes me. On the other hand nothing could be more cogent than Mr. Beeching's remarks on the suggestion that Thorpe addressed Lord Pembroke as "Mr. W. H." on purpose to conceal his identity from the uninitiated:

Mr. Lee argues that for a publisher to have addressed any peer as plain

"Mister" would have been defamation, and a Star Chamber matter, as it well might if the publisher intended an insult. But in any case the peer would have had to set the Star Chamber in motion; and there might be good reasons for not doing so. . . . Those who on the ground of this derogation from Herbert's dignity have denied the possibility of his being the "begetter" of the Sonnets have, perhaps, not always sufficiently considered the impossibility of dedicating them. "To the Right Honorable William, Earle of Pembroke, Lord Chamberlaine to His Majestie, one of his most honorable Privie Counsell, and Knight of the most noble order of the Garter." Had Thorpe ventured upon such a dedication as that, I can conceive the Star Chamber taking action of its own accord.

This could not possibly be better put; and yet Mr. Beeching confesses himself unconvinced. "There is a smug tone," he says, "about the dedication which suggests that while Mr. W. H. was far above Thorpe's own social position, he was yet something less than so magnificent a person as the Earl of Pembroke." The most ardent Pembrokist will scarcely deny that this is delicately and perhaps justly felt.

At one point only does Mr. Beeching's sobriety of statement fail him for a moment. He will not countenance any attempt to identify the "Dark Lady." He says:

The number of brunettes in the capital at any time is legion, and the Sonnets supply no possible clue by which the particular person can be identified. The attempt, therefore, to fix upon someone with whom Pembroke is known to have had relations is merely gratuitous; and it rejoices the heart of any sane spectator to learn that this supposed "dark lady," Mistress Mary Fitton, turns out, when her portraits are examined, to have been conspicuously fair.

Now, in this paragraph one cannot but

feel a touch of uncalled-for asperity. If Mary Fitton was "conspicuously fair," her claims to the doubtful honor of having been Shakespeare's "worse spirit" are certainly knocked on the head. But, apart from this damning discrepancy, the case in her favor seems to me exceedingly strong; and I may, perhaps, be pardoned for doubting whether this opinion deserves to be lightly dismissed as "insane." It is manifestly excessive to say that "the Sonnets supply no possible clue" to the identity of the Dark Lady. They supply one very important clue: namely, that she was the mistress of "Mr. W. H." If "Mr. W. H." cannot be identified, the clue, of course, fails. But if, "W. H." meant William Herbert—and Mr. Beeching sees nothing "insane" in that view—then Mary Fitton, Herbert's mistress, surely becomes a "not impossible she" to take the third place in the trio. For a long time the phrase "in act thy bed-vow broke" seemed to rule her out; while there was nothing to show that she had a third lover of the name of William, as Sonnet CXXXV. not obscurely suggested. But when it appeared from the Arbury records that she was persecuted by the attentions of Sir William Knollys, and was actually (by an almost incredible arrangement) regarded as being betrothed to him, then the case in her favor became, in my eyes, almost overwhelming. It crumbles to naught, of course, if Mary Fitton can be proved to have been fair; and the testimony of all who have examined her portraits at Arbury seems to agree, if not that she was "conspicuously fair," at least that she could not be called dark. That granted, one can only say that chance has played us an elaborate practical joke in heaping coincidence upon coincidence to lead us astray. Had her complexion been dark, one could almost have retorted the accusation of—infirmitiy of judgment—upon anyone who, ac-

cepting Pembroke, could still reject the exquisitely dovetailed evidence in favor of Mary Fitton.

"J. M.," the author of *Shakespeare Self-Revealed*, has a short and simple method of interpretation which relieves us of all further need to discuss Southampton, Pembroke, the Dark Lady, or any other historical question in relation to the Sonnets. In his eyes Shakespeare's "better angel" was the Love of Beauty, and his "worser spirit" the Love of Fame. To these warring tendencies (but why warring?) all the

*The Speaker.*

Sonnets are addressed; and J. M. goes through them one by one, fitting them, not without ingenuity, into his attractive scheme. According to this interpreter, "Mr. W. H." meant "Mr. Will Himself"—a theory at which J. M. arrived quite independently of the learned German who (as he afterwards ascertained) had anticipated him. It is gratifying to find that even in the extraction of sunbeams from cucumbers England can still hold her own with Germany.

*William Archer.*

#### THE FALL OF PORT ARTHUR.

The Japanese have finally succeeded in the first, and perhaps greatest, of the many feats of arms in which they must succeed before they can completely triumph over their mighty enemy. Aided by the formation of the ground, and by the genius of an engineer who has in some mysterious way missed his due need of fame, the Russians had constructed at the eastern tip of the Liao-tung Peninsula a fortress which they intended to be their base for great conquests in the Northern Pacific, which they believed to be impregnable, and which great experts declare would have been impregnable to any besiegers but the Japanese. It was a system of forts, three lines of them, rather than a fortress, which had to be taken. No other generals, even if commanding German or French or British troops, would have ventured to expend so many trained men on such an effort, or would have been so uninfluenced by the fear that the hideous slaughter which marked every repulse and every partial victory might demoralize their soldiery, or so appal their people at home that a continuance of

the policy of attack would become impossible. The place, remember, was not defended by Chinese or by natives of India, but by Russians, who behind fortifications are among the best troops in the world, who were provided with artillery at least as good and as plentiful as that of their assailants, who had a hero to command them, who had risen to the temper in which death seems a mere occurrence in life, and who believed almost to the last that relief either by land or sea was certain to arrive. The Power which could carry across sea an army capable of such an achievement, of such a siege of eight months, of making a series of storming assaults, few of which completely succeeded, without discouragement, and of carrying it all through to a triumphant conclusion, as a mere incident in a greater campaign, has proved herself, whatever her future history, to be one of the Great Powers. There is no State in existence whose soldiers would encounter the victors of Port Arthur in equal numbers with any certainty of victory. Indeed, there have been incidents in the siege, like

the storm of Nanshan or of 203-Mètre Hill, which have compelled experienced soldiers to doubt whether the Japanese are not the finest fighters in the world, and whether Kuropatkin is not right in demanding a grand superiority in numbers as the first, indeed the essential, condition for any victory by the troops under his command. It will be a more necessary condition than ever now, for the news cannot be long concealed from the troops on the Sha-ho; and little as the Russian soldier is demoralized by suffering, it is inconceivable that the spirits of the men, and especially of the officers, should not be depressed by a defeat which they have been taught to consider impossible, at least while the hero of Russian imaginations remained to conduct the defence.

This, the rise of Japan into the position of a successful fighting Power, as strong in all the elements of strength as any Power in the world, is, we conceive, the first and greatest result of the surrender of Port Arthur. It will make the Island Empire the object of universal international attention, of a hundred hopes and fears, which will develop into elaborate combinations and intrigues, and will for the moment directly, perhaps painfully, affect the relations of the European Powers to each other. The owners of the Philippines, of Indo-China, or Kiao-chow, of Java, perhaps even the owners of India and Australia, will recognize with a more perfect certainty that a new and most powerful State has been born into the world. They knew that before, it will be said, and it is true; but the knowledge was impaired in completeness by an element of uncertainty, by a doubt whether the great fortress might not after all be relieved by Admiral Rozhdestvensky, or delivered by a victorious march of General Kuropatkin. We have noticed the doubt even in England; and on the Conti-

nent, where the belief in the invincibility of Russia is stronger than in this country, it has affected every expression of opinion. The difference between the fact, and the fear or hope of the fact, is often very wide, and it will, we think, prove to be so in this case. The world discounts most things, but it cannot discount a thunderbolt or an earthquake, or even an assassination. Mankind in general will first shudder, as at some event of the greatest moment which the majority had never foreseen, and then begin discussing its immediate consequences. Will there be peace, it will be asked, and what will be the effect upon the prospects of revolution in Russia?

It is impossible to answer either question with complete confidence, because the replies depend upon two unknown quantities,—the inner character of the Russian Czar, and the silent opinion of the huge mass of the Russian peasantry. We should say ourselves that it was next to impossible for a Government like the Russian, which rests for internal affairs firstly upon the army, and secondly upon the prestige of the Czar among his own people, to make peace until General Kuropatkin has made his grand effort, and either been defeated, or what is quite as possible, has been so weakened by a series of sanguinary battles that his army has ceased to be a factor in the problem. The rulers of Russia have been aware for some time that Port Arthur must fall, and regard its surrender as part of the defeat of a Navy which they have not been accustomed to consider a prime element in their own greatness. They will think it safer to risk an army, which they can replace, than to admit that this army cannot defeat an Asiatic people, and that they themselves do not know how to organize victory by land. Their repute with the Army would be gone, as much gone as the repute of

an officer who declined a challenge; and without repute with the Army they would never be safe against insurrection, or those Palace revolts which at one time so frequently marked the history of Russia. It is perfectly true that the war is most unpopular even with sections of the Army, and that peace would be an immense relief to most important classes; but to welcome peace or to crave for peace, and to rejoice in it after a great defeat, are two widely different things. A keen wound to national pride is rarely forgiven by any race, and among the great races of the world the Slav is certainly not the most devoid of sensitive national pride. He has trusted always in his Czar in confidence of victory, and after his greatest defeat the Czar of the moment passed away and his whole social system was reorganized. The chances of peace, too, depend upon the terms of peace, and the terms of peace as yet adumbrated by the representatives of Japan are not favorable to speedy pacification. Russia may recede from Manchuria, as she has repeatedly receded from Constantinople, and will hardly feel the cession of Saghalien; but the Japanese insist on an indemnity, and an indemnity, besides irritating Imperial pride, will rouse in the governing group the feeling that it will be cheaper to fight on. What are the lives of *moujiks* to a great Russian compared with a humiliation?

*The Spectator.*

The second question, the effect of the surrender upon revolution in Russia, is more perplexing still. Western Europe, misled in part by its own experience, is attaching great importance to a Constitutional movement which it sees is in progress in Russia. All the educated, it says, desire the introduction of a representative system. That is in the main true, and if Russia were as Great Britain, France, or even Germany, there could be little doubt of the result. But there is no proof that in Russia the educated lead the people, and it is quite certain that by themselves—that is, without support either from the soldiers or the peasants—the educated are powerless against the bureaucracy, which dreads a Constitution. It is quite true that the peasantry are just now distressed by economic causes, harassed by taxation, and more or less indignant at the demand on the Reservists; but for all that the West knows they may be looking for redress to that very autocratic power which the educated are so anxious to suppress. A *Jacquerie* is at least as probable in Russia as a revolution. That great changes will follow a great defeat in the Far East is, we think, certain; but to calculate the direction of those changes, we must wait till we know whether General Kuropatkin is, as a result of sanguinary battles, to march into Korea or retreat on Kharbin.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

The first literary fruit of the Tibetan expedition is a small book by Mr. Powell Millington, "To Lhassa at Last."

The Messrs. Methuen are to publish a book on "The English Buccaneers"

by Mr. John Masefield. If it is one half as stirring as his ballads it will not lack for readers.

Hereafter the "Mercure de France" will be published, as is usual with French reviews, once a fortnight in

stead of monthly. Since its foundation in January, 1890, the *Mercure* has increased in size from 32 to 300 pages, and in price from 40 centimes to 1fr. 25. It has thriven, in spite of its unique devotion to literature. The last hundred and thirty or so pages of each number are devoted to a "Revue du Mois," or "encyclopédie au jour le jour du mouvement universel des idées," in which the current literature of all Europe is reviewed, briefly and competently.

The word "Temple" has come to be a synonym for a volume alluring as literature and dainty in typography. As applied to the new series of "Temple Topographies," published in London by J. M. Dent & Co. and in this country by E. P. Dutton & Co., it retains the full significance which it has come to have in other connections. It is the aim of these volumes to present the history, the scenery, the architecture, the ancient traditions and the present-day aspects of English towns and hamlets. In one of the volumes before us Mr. Edmund H. New describes and pictures Evesham and its famous abbey. Of the second the parish of Broadway, in Worcester county, from whose hill one may look into thirteen English counties, is the subject. Mr. New is again the illustrator, but the text is written, and very delightfully written, by Mr. Algernon Gissing.

E. B. Treat & Co. publish a new and enlarged edition of the volume entitled "Makers of the American Republic," which contains a series of historical lectures upon the early colonists,—the Virginians, Pilgrims, Hollanders, Puritans, Quakers, Scotch and Huguenots. Most of these lectures, sixteen in all, were delivered by the Rev. David Gregg.

D.D., either to the congregation of which he was pastor, or upon historic and patriotic anniversaries and occasions; but there are added lectures on The Bench and Bar by Justice W. W. Goodrich of the New York Supreme Court, and on Some Medical Men in the Revolution, by Dr. Sidney H. Carney, Jr., Secretary of the New York Historical Society. The lectures group effectively and present vividly some interesting phases of early American history, and their defects are those incident to the popular pulpit and platform style.

"The Letters Which Never Reached Him," though they do not rival in fascination a certain series whose name they recall, are attracting considerable attention in England, and American readers will welcome the edition which E. P. Dutton & Co. publish. The writer of the letters is a German lady of talent and charm, who shares the journeyings of a brother in the diplomatic service, and who is leaving Peking with him for New York, in the fall of 1890; and the man whom they never reached, seen in the mirror of her admiration—and, later, love—is an ethnologist and explorer of brilliant achievement. Covering a period of a year only, but dated from Vancouver to Berlin, they give vivid travel sketches, and daring comment on social life. But the central interest is always in Peking, and the range of emotions from uneasiness to anxiety, despair, hope, and despair again is strikingly portrayed. In spite of the disclosure of the title, the plot piques curiosity, but the book makes its chief impression by other than dramatic effects. As yet, no guesses have identified the author.

## THE DREAM-WIND.

When, like a sleeping child  
Or a bird in the nest,  
The day is gathered  
To the earth's breast . . .  
*Hush! . . . 'tis the Dream-wind,*  
Breathing peace,  
Breathing rest,  
Out of the Gardens of Sleep in the  
West.

O come to me, wandering  
Wind of the West!  
Gray doves of slumber  
Come hither to rest! . . .  
*Hush! . . . now the wings cease*  
Below the dim trees . . .  
And the White Rose of Rest  
Breathes low in the Gardens of Sleep  
in the West.

William Sharp.

Pall Mall Magazine.

## THE FIRE O' LOGS.

The builders of the olden days  
They found small stint and little  
dearth:  
Teïke two from out their goodly ways  
The wide-span walls and open hearth.  
The hearth where all mid gather round  
Set square w'l' shining metal dogs  
That hold w'l' hands of iron bands  
Their burden o' the bleïzen logs.  
No, no. I hold to what I own  
There's naught to belit the heart o'  
stone.

For here the flames do leap and throw  
Their fork'd antlers fierce and tall  
And chase the chequered underglow  
All rosy on the whitewashed wall.  
And here the sooty chimney-back  
Do show the seïms of olden brick  
W'l' comely flaw that Time mid draw  
Where sudden sparks fly fast and  
thick.  
No, no. They don't know what they  
says  
The folk that bleïme the olden ways.  
For here's the seat beside the fire  
Where some mid sit and teïke their  
beer.

And those that come in mean attire  
Are warmed alike, and find good cheer.  
And here the carrier from the road  
Looks in and ventures, "Who's to go?"  
And turns his feïce towards the bleïze  
And stamps his girt boots free from  
snow.

"Come in, come in. What news to-  
night?  
Yes, yes. The fire's a goodly sight."

And here from logs of hewen wood  
There pipes the sound o' winds they  
knew  
When they were standen tall and good  
A-wrastlen w'l' the storms that blew.  
And clear to eyes that come to see  
Beyond the pleïce where most do get  
They shed once more the glowing store  
Of summer suns long since a-set.  
So I do hold, there's none so good  
'S the fire that's piled w'l' logs o' wood.

Pamela Tennant.

The Spectator.

## THE BRIDGE OF DEATH.

Groundless gulf of æther deep,  
Space not even light can span,  
Nor the floating stars that sweep  
Onward since their orbs began  
Sailing by some secret plan.

Not the gold-paved path of day,  
Not the bright-stained storm-born  
bow,  
Not the moon-track's silver way,  
Can sustain the souls that go  
To that land which none may know.

But the spirits of our dead  
Will await to lead us on;  
They can fly where none could tread,  
Their wings we may rest upon  
Meeting dear ones long since gone.

Once that far-off phantom shore  
Seemed a lonely fearful place,  
Now our dead are gone before  
It will be no stranger face  
Our reopened eyes shall trace.

George Ives.

The Saturday Review.